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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 57TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ZAHID (Vice-Chairman) (Morocco)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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In the absence of Mr. Dinu (Romania), Mr. Zahid (Morocco), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 112: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued) (A/C.5/47/L.21, L.34 and L.35)

1. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/47/L.21 and draft decisions A/C.5/47/L.34 and L.35, said that the delegations participating in the informal consultations had shown a spirit of compromise which had resulted in a consensus on those texts.

2. Draft resolution A/C.5/47/L.21 contained an introduction and four sections. The section on personnel management planning covered the topics of recruitment, composition of the Secretariat, secondment, employment of spouses, career development and improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat. The other sections related to the administration of justice, reporting, and amendments to staff regulations. With regard to the request of the General Assembly that the annual publication of the list of staff of the United Nations Secretariat should be resumed as of 30 June 1993 (sect. III, para. 2), that list was expected to contain an organizational chart of the Secretariat, as well as indexes by nationality and alphabetical order. Delegations would also appreciate the publication of an updated telephone directory.

3. Draft decision A/C.5/47/L.34 took note of the amendments to the Staff Rules and draft decision A/C.5/47/L.35 concerned violations of privileges and immunities. The two draft decisions and the draft resolution should be viewed as complementary and she recommended their adoption by consensus.

4. Mr. JAKUBOWSKI (United States of America) requested confirmation from the Secretariat that the Staff Rules were a code of conduct applying to all United Nations officials, including those elected or appointed. His delegation had joined the consensus on the relevant draft decision based on that understanding.

5. Ms. CLIFF (United Kingdom) drew attention to administrative instruction ST/AI/382 of 3 March 1993 regarding special measures to improve the status of women in the Secretariat, paragraph 7 of which stated that a post would become available for male recruitment only after it had been vacant for 12 months and no qualified woman candidate had been identified. Such a policy raised questions with regard to the interpretation of the Charter and had legal and practical implications. Programme managers who were unable to fill posts for periods of over a year might face difficulties.

6. Mr. RAE (India) said that the questions raised by the United States and United Kingdom delegations had merit, but they were not germane to the draft resolution before the Committee. The Committee should take a decision on the draft resolution before discussing those questions.

7. Mr. FONTAINE-ORTIZ (Cuba) agreed with the representative of India. His delegation was not aware of the administrative instruction referred to by the representative of the United Kingdom and would like clarification as to how it was linked to the approval of the draft resolution. It would also welcome information from the Secretariat about any connection with the

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Secretary-General's policy on vacancy management. His delegation wondered how the goals set by the General Assembly for the recruitment of women would be reconciled with the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

8. Ms. VASAK (France) said that her delegation would welcome clarification of the administrative instruction on the status of women. Great care must be taken to avoid practising reverse discrimination.

9. Mr. CHUINKAM (Cameroon) said that the Committee must use caution in the signals it sent to the Secretary-General, who had been asked to find ways to bring about the equitable representation of women in the Secretariat. If the Committee became too closely involved in that process, it ran the risk of practising micro-management, which it had frequently opposed.

10. Mr. SENGWE (Zimbabwe) said that the Secretary-General was operating within his mandate from the General Assembly as expressed in the relevant resolutions. The goals set with respect to redressing the gender imbalance were within the spirit and letter of those resolutions. Nothing could be achieved by questioning the Secretary-General on the subject of reverse discrimination, as long as the Secretariat was operating within the mandate of General Assembly resolution 45/239 C.

11. Mr. WANG Xiaochu (China) said that the Committee had before it a draft resolution and two draft decisions on which a consensus had been achieved during extensive informal consultations. The issue of the status of women in the Secretariat could also be discussed but, in the opinion of his delegation, it had no direct bearing on the matter under consideration.

12. Mr. OSELLA (Argentina) said that his delegation would welcome information from the Director of Personnel on the connection between administrative instruction ST/AI/382 and the goals set by the General Assembly for the recruitment of women.

13. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee should first adopt the draft resolution and the draft decisions, on which a consensus had been achieved in information consultations, and then hear the Director of Personnel.

14. Mr. JAKUBOWSKI (United States of America) said that the ability of his delegation to join in the consensus was dependent in part on the response to be given by the Director of Personnel to the question it had raised. As things stood, his delegation would be unable to support the draft resolution.

15. Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal) said that her delegation agreed with the Chairman.

16. Mr. GIUFFRIDA (Italy) said that his delegation shared the views expressed by the representatives of the United Kingdom and France. It had no objection to taking a decision, provided that that was not interpreted by the Secretariat as implying acceptance of the administrative instruction on the status of women in the Secretariat and the vacancy management policy.

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17. Mr. DUHALT VILLAR (Mexico) and Mr. FRANCIS (Australia) said that their delegations shared the concerns expressed by the United Kingdom and France, and favoured proceeding with the adoption of the draft resolution and draft decisions.

18. Mr. DUQUE (Director of Personnel), replying to the representative of the United States, said that the Staff Rules applied to staff members only, not to any other officials.

19. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that his delegation had been under the impression that the Staff Rules applied to all those who drew salaries from the United Nations regular budget, including, for instance, the chairmen of expert bodies.

20. Mr. DUQUE (Director of Personnel) said that the Staff Rules defined the obligations and privileges of staff members under the authority of the Secretary-General. The chairmen of subsidiary organs of the General Assembly and the judges of the International Court of Justice were not under the supervision of the Secretary-General.

21. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that the information provided by the Director of Personnel was contrary to his delegation's understanding. If, indeed, a large number of officials drawing salaries from the regular budget were not governed by any system of rules, his delegation could not join the consensus.

22. Mr. JADMANI (Pakistan) said that his delegation appreciated the concern expressed by the United Kingdom and United States representatives. Since those concerns affected the adoption of the draft resolution, it might be useful for the Committee to hold further informal consultations.

23. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, since one delegation no longer joined in the consensus on the draft resolution, the Committee might consider the remaining questions on its agenda and return to personnel questions later in the meeting.

24. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria) said that a consensus had been reached on all the texts issuing from the informal consultations. The Committee should therefore proceed with their adoption.

25. Mr. WANG Xiaochu (China) agreed.

26. Mr. STÖCKL (Germany) said that he had participated in the informal consultations during which the representative of the Secretariat had stated that the Staff Rules also applied to officials paid out of the United Nations regular budget. All those who were responsible to the General Assembly should adhere to the spirit of the Staff Rules, which were decided upon by the General Assembly.

27. Mr. FONTAINE-ORTIZ (Cuba) said that his delegation would prefer not to postpone a decision on the matter and that, since the draft texts had been drawn up on the basis of consensus, they should be adopted by consensus. It was Cuba's understanding that certain officials of the United Nations system, such as the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the judges of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), were not covered by the Staff Rules and that their conduct was regulated by

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special conditions determined by the General Assembly. He suggested that further clarification of that point from the Secretariat would help the Committee to reach a consensus on the matter at hand.

28. Mr. GIUFFRIDA (Italy) said that, as he recalled, when, during the informal consultations, the representative of the United States had sought clarification on the applicability of the Staff Rules to non-Secretariat officials, the representative of the Secretariat had been unable to give a precise answer and had merely stated that, to the best of his knowledge, the rules might apply to other appointed or elected officials. The United States representative had not, however, made any link at that time between its support for the resolution and the scope of the Staff Rules. He therefore agreed with the representative of Austria that there had been, and continued to be a consensus on the draft texts and he appealed to all members of the Committee to take a decision without further delay.

29. Mr. TOYAMA (Japan) noted that no resolution had been adopted by the Committee on personnel questions since December 1990 and that a great deal of time and effort had been spent in drafting and reaching consensus on the draft resolution currently before the Committee. He commended the representative of Austria on her efforts in achieving that consensus and urged members to adopt the draft resolution without further delay.

30. Mr. DUQUE (Director of Personnel), clarifying the issue of the applicability of the Staff Rules, drew attention to the scope and purpose of the Staff Regulations of the United Nations as defined in the Staff Rules and, in particular, to regulation 1.2, which stated that staff members were subject to the authority of the Secretary-General and to assignment by him to any of the activities or offices of the United Nations. It was clear from those general statements that the Staff Rules could not apply to those elected and appointed officials outside the Secretariat referred to by other speakers, but only to staff members under the authority of the Secretary-General. In response to the point raised by the representative of Cuba, he confirmed that the General Assembly determined the conditions of service of the officials in question, which were embodied in its resolution and not in any regulation per se.

31. Mr. ONWUALIA (Nigeria) said that he was not surprised that the Committee had reached an impasse in its efforts to adopt the resolution, since one delegation had systematically sought to impede progress on the resolution from the very outset. He noted that the United States delegation had been present during the informal consultations when consensus had finally been achieved on the draft resolution, and he therefore supported those delegations which had called for its adoption without further delay on the basis of consensus.

32. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) said that every delegation had the right, at any time before the adoption of a resolution, to make its views known and to make any efforts it thought necessary to improve the text. He hoped, however, that the reply given by the Director of Personnel would assist those delegations which were still experiencing difficulties with the draft resolution to proceed with its adoption. The officials in question, such as the Chairmen of ACABQ and the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), were not members of the Secretariat and were therefore covered not by the Staff Rules but by specific

conditions set forth in the relevant resolutions. There was therefore no link between those officials and the staff members of the Secretariat covered by the draft resolution currently before the Committee.

33. Ms. SHENWICK (United States of America) said that, in the informal consultations, her delegation had originally proposed the establishment of a code of conduct covering all United Nations officials but, in the light of assurances from a member of the Secretariat that the Staff Rules appeared to apply to all United Nations officials and following consultations with United States authorities and legal experts, it had decided to withdraw that proposal. Her delegation had made it very clear, however, that it would require confirmation, in a formal meeting, and from the Director of Personnel, of the scope of the Staff Rules. As no such confirmation had been given, her delegation wished to clarify the point prior to the adoption of the draft resolution. In the light of the explanation given by the Director of Personnel, she wondered whether the United Nations should not consider adopting some form of common code of conduct, which would cover all its officials, not just members of the Secretariat. Given such an undertaking, the United States would be happy to proceed with the adoption of the resolution by consensus.

34. Mr. STÖCKL (Germany) said that the explanation by the Director of Personnel had been very clear. The issue of elected officials whose conditions of service fell within the purview not of the Secretariat, but of the bodies which had elected them, should be taken up at another time. He commended the delegation of the United States on its readiness to abide by the consensus on the draft resolution, which it hoped could be adopted without further ado.

35. Mr. FONTAINE-ORTIZ (Cuba) agreed. As the duties and obligations of officials of the Organization who were not members of the Secretariat did not fall within the scope of the Staff Rules, the issue was not relevant to the draft resolution under consideration. With regard to the proposal that the Secretariat should consider a common code of conduct, he pointed out that, as noted by the Director of Personnel, the Secretary-General was responsible only for the staff of the Secretariat, while other officials were answerable to the General Assembly. Such a code of conduct should therefore be considered by the General Assembly and not by the Secretariat.

36. Mr. SY (Senegal) supported the views expressed by the representative of Cuba. The draft resolution under consideration dealt with personnel issues and the question of a code of conduct for elected officials reporting to bodies outside the Secretariat did not therefore fall under the current agenda item. He urged the United States representative to agree to the adoption of the draft resolution and suggested that its legitimate concerns should be taken up as a separate matter.

37. Mr. RAZVIN (Russian Federation) said that it was inevitable that the Staff Rules should require periodic amendments, in accordance with the changing times. Such amendments posed questions which could not be entered into by the Committee without first hearing the views of legal experts. With regard to the draft resolution under consideration, he said that the consensus which had been achieved after great effort meant that all meant that all members were, on balance, prepared to accept the text as a whole, even though they might have problems with certain details. His delegation believed that the Committee

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should proceed to the adoption of the draft resolution and take up Members' concerns about the scope and applicability of the Staff Rules as a separate matter.

38. Mr. DUQUE (Director of Personnel), in response to the point raised by the United States, said that the Secretariat had no mandate to prepare a code of conduct for officials who reported directly to such bodies as the General Assembly and the International Court of Justice.

39. The CHAIRMAN, in response to a request by Ms. SHENWICK (United States of America), supported by Mr. WANG Xiaochu (China), suggested that the meeting should be adjourned to enable members to consult informally on the issues raised by the United States representative, with a view to adopting the draft resolution when the meeting reconvened.

The meeting was suspended at 11.55 a.m. and resumed at 12.15 p.m.

40. Ms. SHENWICK (United States of America) said that her delegation was now prepared to join the consensus and would explain its position after the decision.

41. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should proceed to the adoption of the draft resolution and the two draft decisions.

42. Draft resolution A/C.5/47/L.21 was adopted.

43. Draft decision A/C.5/47/L.34 was adopted.

44. Draft decision A/C.5/47/L.35 was adopted.

45. Mr. DUHALT VILLAR (Mexico), speaking in explanation of his delegation's position, said he was gratified by the adoption of the resolution and the decisions on personnel questions that had been pending for some years. On the point raised by the United Kingdom and other representatives regarding personnel recruitment on the basis of gender, Mexico supported any effort to achieve equality of men and women in the United Nations staff, but emphasized the need to eliminate any restrictions in recruitment. The problem could not be solved by imposing restrictions or treating candidates unequally. That was clearly the view expressed in paragraph 6 of the resolution which had just been adopted. Any administrative instruction issued by the Secretary-General or any practice established by the Secretariat should be in keeping with that paragraph.

46. Ms. SHENWICK (United States of America) said that her delegation regretted the confusion that had arisen earlier, but believed that it had acted in good faith in relying on the representations of the Secretariat. During the ensuing consultations, she had been gratified by the concern expressed by Member States over the regulations, or the lack thereof, governing the ethical conduct of United Nations officials. There seemed to be a consensus that the conduct of officials should be governed by a code, or that, at the least, the question of such a code should be discussed. Her delegation was concerned that no rules existed to govern the conduct of officials appointed by the General Assembly, and it intended to raise the issue again in the plenary Assembly.

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(Ms. Shenwick, United States)

47. Her delegation could not agree that the existing United Nations rules did not apply to United Nations officials in the broadest sense of the term. Even if there were no rules of conduct apart from those included in the Staff Rules, prudence, diligence, good management and ethical considerations in general should induce officials to be bound by the spirit, if not the letter, of the Staff Rules in so far as they applied to their positions.

48. Mr. FRANCIS (Australia) expressed his delegation's appreciation at the successful negotiation of the resolution which had just been adopted. It was particularly important as the Secretary-General's ongoing restructuring of the Secretariat needed to be underpinned by a modern personnel management system. His delegation looked forward to an improvement in the representation of women at the senior levels. It wished to draw the Secretariat's attention to paragraph 6, to which the representative of Mexico had also referred, and to paragraph B.11 of the resolution, which made it clear that discrimination against staff members of either sex would not be tolerated. That, of course, was perfectly consistent with the terms of paragraph 3 of Article 101 of the Charter.

49. The terms of administrative instruction ST/AI/382 needed to be carefully reviewed in the light of the resolution just adopted. It was precisely the likelihood of such developments that had led his delegation to take the position that the resolution would have been significantly improved by the establishment, outside the Office of Human Resources Management, of an equal employment opportunity unit capable of effectively policing personnel procedures and actions throughout the Secretariat.

50. Finally, he drew the Secretariat's attention to paragraph 4 of section II of the resolution, which made it clear that Member States expected the Secretary-General to interpret his guidelines on sexual harassment to encompass more of the working relationship than just what took place within the physical confines of the Secretariat.

51. Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal) said that, in her delegation's view, administrative instruction ST/AI/382 contravened Article 8 of the Charter and would have a negative impact on geographical distribution. Indeed, many countries already experienced great difficulty in presenting male candidates; if they were now required to propose female candidates, their task would become even harder.

52. Mr. RAE (India) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on the resolution which had just been adopted reluctantly as is regretted that an important policy aspect of the item on personnel questions, namely, equitable geographical representation - as reflected by the formula for determining desirable ranges - had not been finalized by the Fifth Committee, despite the decision in resolution 42/220 that the matter should be reviewed at the forty-fifth session. He hoped that the Working Group of the Fifth Committee which was to be established would arrive at a satisfactory recommendation for adoption by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. Despite its reservations, his delegation had joined the consensus because it was important that a statement should be made by the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly on personnel questions. At a time of change and restructuring, the Committee should provide guidance to the General Assembly on an issue which affected the most vital resource of the United Nations.

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53. Mr. JADMANI (Pakistan) said that the agenda item on personnel questions was important to his delegation since under that item the General Assembly provided guidelines to assist the Secretary-General in administering the affairs of the Secretariat. That was particularly important during the process of restructuring initiated by the Secretary-General. His delegation had joined in the consensus so that the Secretariat could carry out its work more efficiently. He hoped that the subject of desirable ranges would receive serious consideration and attention.

54. Mr. KARBUCZKY (Hungary) agreed with other delegations that paragraph 6 of the resolution which had just been adopted met the concerns over gender-based discrimination in the Secretariat. He felt that the resolution would give clear guidance on achieving a gender balance without the need for discriminatory measures.

55. Mr. SY (Senegal), referring to paragraph 6 of the resolution, said that many delegations held that no gender-based discrimination was permissible in recruitment. There had, however, been a consensus to ask the Secretary-General to take measures to compensate for the underrepresentation of women. In cases where male and female candidates were equally qualified and a woman was given preference, that preference did not constitute discrimination.

56. His delegation welcomed paragraph 5 of the section of the resolution dealing with the composition of the Secretariat, which asked for flexibility on the question of desirable ranges, provided that was not to the detriment of equitable geographical distribution. However, paragraph 3 of the section on secondment needed to be defined more clearly. Certain Governments renewed such secondments under internal legal provisions that took precedence over any other agreement.

57. With regard to the draft decision concerning violations of privileges and immunities (A/C.5/47/L.35), he said he hoped that the report of the Secretary-General on the question would also reflect the opinions of the States concerned, since immunity was not technically a question for the Fifth Committee and involved complex legal considerations.

58. Mr. WANG Xiaochu (China) said that, on the matter of desirable ranges, his delegation shared the views expressed by the representative of India and Pakistan and other delegations. The question had long been discussed in the General Assembly, but unfortunately had not yet been resolved. He hoped that through serious discussion a solution would be forthcoming.

59. Ms. CLIFF (United Kingdom) said that the United States representative had referred to issues which, in her delegation's view, were outside the scope of the resolution and the decisions on personnel questions which had just been adopted. She would like more information regarding the intentions of the United States delegation. For the record, she observed that the United Kingdom had not entered into any understanding regarding further work in that area during the remainder of the forty-seventh session.

60. Her delegation was becoming very concerned over the working methods of the Fifth Committee. There was a growing disorder, bordering on abuse of the consensus procedures the Committee had been trying to develop since the

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(Ms. Cliff, United Kingdom)

forty-first session. She hoped that the Chairman and the Bureau would give some thought to the Committee's working methods and provide guidance thereon to the incoming chairman and bureau for the forty-eighth session. In her delegation's view, one symptom of the disorder was the introduction, very late in the process of negotiation of consensus texts, of far-reaching proposals that stretched the limits of the specific agenda items referred to the Fifth Committee by the General Assembly. Sometimes, indeed, the same proposal was introduced, equally late, under more than one agenda item. Such tactics could prolong the process of negotiating consensus texts almost indefinitely.

61. Her remarks were not aimed at any particular delegation. Consensus-building was of great importance to her delegation, which felt that all delegations should seriously reflect on ways to improve the process during the next session.

62. Ms. VASAK (France) said that her delegation, too, had been concerned over the growing disorder in the work of the Fifth Committee.

63. Mr. TIERLINCK (Belgium) said that he fully agreed with the United Kingdom that it was high time for the Committee to find a way to improve its working methods.

64. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America), speaking in exercise of the right of reply with regard to the remarks by the United Kingdom representative concerning the disorder in the Committee, observed that his delegation had been given an understanding during the informal consultations that it felt had not been carried through. His delegation had been compelled to raise an issue of extreme concern to the United States, and regretted it if that had made the Committee's work more complicated. Nevertheless, it would continue to present the United States position, while trying not to disrupt the work of the Committee.

65. Mr. FONTAINE-ORTIZ (Cuba) said that, while the General Assembly had set guidelines for the advancement of women in the Secretariat, other principles also had priority, for instance, competence, integrity and the geographical distribution of staff. Preference should be given to women in recruitment and appointment only if all those other conditions were also met.

66. Member States differed on what the Secretary-General's role should be in administrative and budgetary matters: some wanted him to have full freedom of action and others instead argued for micro-management, an approach with which Cuba disagreed.

67. His delegation regretted that the issue of desirable ranges had not been settled, but expected the Working Group to be established under the resolution which had just been adopted to give the matter serious consideration.

68. He agreed with the United Kingdom that serious consideration should be given to the Committee's methods of work. The root of the problem was a mistaken interpretation of resolution 41/213 on the matter of consensus. Consensus should not be taken as an absolute rule, and the practice of extending it to non-budgetary questions needed to be reviewed.

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69. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) expressed the hope that the adoption of the resolution and the two decisions foreshadowed a more coherent and transparent personnel policy. The Secretary-General would then be in a better position to carry out his mandate. His delegation, like those of Mexico and Australia, attached great importance to paragraph 6 of the resolution. He regretted that parity between men and women had not been achieved in the Secretariat, despite the existence of a consensus in the General Assembly. Algeria hoped that paragraph 4 of the section of the resolution dealing with the composition of the Secretariat would lead to more efficient implementation of the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

70. Mr. STÖCKL (Germany), referring to paragraph 8 of annex I to the Staff Regulations regarding the language allowance for General Service staff, said that his Government was of the view that it should be extended to include the German language and should apply to the staff of the German Translation Section, especially since their salaries and benefits were paid not out of the regular budget but out of a trust fund financed by the German-speaking Member States.

71. Mr. SASTRAWAN (Indonesia) expressed regret at the Committee's failure to take action on the issue of desirable ranges, which had been pending for a number of years.

72. Mr. GIUFFRIDA (Italy) said that his delegation had joined the consensus on the texts which had been adopted because of the importance it attached to draft decision A/C.5/47/L.35. Member States should, in their own interests, make it a priority to have a thorough debate on any cases of violations of privileges and immunities reported by the Secretary-General.

73. His delegation fully agreed that there must be no gender-based discrimination in recruitment or promotion at any level of the United Nations.

74. Mr. BARIMANI (Islamic Republic of Iran) endorsed the comments of the representatives of India, Pakistan and other delegations regarding the question of desirable ranges and regretted that the issue was still unresolved. His delegation had joined the consensus on the understanding that the issue would be dealt with by the Working Group to be established under the draft resolution.

75. Mr. DUQUE (Director of Personnel), replying to points raised by delegations, assured the Committee that the Secretariat would submit all the reports which had been requested. It had not been possible earlier to take the technical action required to amend the Staff Regulations because the question had become embroiled in the negotiations on the draft resolution on personnel questions. He hoped that in the future the issue would be separated from political concerns.

76. With regard to the administrative instruction on special measures to improve the status of women in the Secretariat (ST/AI/382), he assured the Committee that the Secretariat would always be guided by the Charter, specifically all paragraphs of Article 101 and Article 8. The Secretary-General and the General Assembly had concluded that Article 8 had not been fully observed in the past and the Secretary-General was determined to take steps to remedy the gender violations, especially at the higher levels of the Organization. The administrative instruction had been cleared by all the appropriate persons, including the Secretary-General, the Legal Counsel and

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(Mr. Duque)

other Secretariat officials; staff representatives had also been consulted. While the document was not perfect, it did serve to promote the goal of eliminating discrimination against women. There appeared to be something wrong in the Secretariat, since the higher the post, the fewer the number of women considered or appointed. The Office of Human Resources Management had, for instance, found that, on occasion, qualified women working at other duty stations where there were no vacancies had not been considered for placement elsewhere within the system; it was seeking to ensure that no one would thus be forgotten.

77. With regard to the policy that a post was available for male recruitment only after it had been vacant for 12 months (para. 7 of the administrative instruction), it was intended to ensure that a fair search was made, well in advance, for the best qualified candidate, before a permanent appointment could be made. In practice, however, departments were authorized to fill the post on an interim basis while the search was being conducted.

78. The appointment of women should in no way compromise the highest standards of competence, efficiency and integrity, or geographical distribution, and the Secretariat had no intention of waiving any of those requirements while taking the steps set out in paragraph 2 of the administrative instruction. The principle of justice would always apply, and there was no intention of creating reverse discrimination.

79. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 112 and he requested the Rapporteur to report thereon directly to the General Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 121: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION FOR THE REFERENDUM IN WESTERN SAHARA (continued)

80. Mr. TIERLINCK (Belgium), reporting on the informal consultations with regard to the financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), said that the Committee would not be able to consider the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/743) in view of the recent decision by the Security Council concerning the implementation of the Settlement Plan regarding the question of Western Sahara. It had accordingly been proposed, in the light of Security Council resolution 809 (1993), and in particular the activities enumerated in paragraphs 2 and 3 thereof, that the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that a commitment authorization in an amount not exceeding US$ 3,449,700 gross ($3,319,400 net) per month for the period from 1 March to 30 June 1993 should be given to the Secretary-General, subject to the concurrence of ACABQ. Those resources should be utilized from the unencumbered balance of the appropriation provided for MINURSO.

81. He explained that the additional activities required under paragraphs 2 and 3 of Security Council resolution 809 (1993), for which resources had not been included in the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/743), were the following: (a) intensified efforts by the Secretary-General to conduct several rounds of talks with the parties and with representatives of neighbouring countries, possibly including talks in New York or Geneva, or, alternatively, to conduct "shuttle" diplomacy between Laayoune and Tindouf; and (b) preparations for the referendum, specifically the establishment of an Identification

Commission to conduct identification and registration of all Saharans counted in the 1974 census taken by the Spanish authorities and aged 18 years and older. The Identification Commission would conduct research in order to review the census carefully, arrange for the revised list to be published in the Territory and in places outside the Territory where a number of Western Saharans were known to be living, and publish instructions on how Western Saharans could apply in writing.

82. Those activities would require additional resources relating primarily to the costs of civilian personnel, including consultants, travel, transport and air operations and miscellaneous equipment, supplies and services. Those resources were currently not expected to exceed $1,120,200 per month for the period from 1 April to 31 May 1993.

83. The Committee decided to recommend that, in the light of Security Council resolution 809 (1993) and, in particular, the activities enumerated in paragraphs 2 and 3 of that resolution, the General Assembly should authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding $3,499,700 gross ($3,319,400 net) per month for the period 1 March to 30 June 1993, subject to the concurrence of the Advisory Committee, from the unencumbered balance of the appropriation approved for MINURSO.

84. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 121, and he requested the Rapporteur to report thereon directly to the General Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 117. FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS ANGOLA VERIFICATION MISSION (continued)

85. Mr. TIERLINCK (Belgium), reporting on the informal consultations with regard to the financing of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM II), said that, in the light of the change in the operational plan of that Mission and the need by the Secretariat to revise the Secretary-General's report on its financing (A/47/744), the Committee would regrettably not be able to follow the normal procedure pending submission of a revised report by the Secretary-General and the related report of the Advisory Committee.

86. It had therefore been proposed that the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that, as an ad hoc measure, in order to provide for the continued maintenance of the Mission, a commitment authorization in an amount not exceeding US$ 3,500,000 gross ($3,400,000 net) per month for the period from 1 March to 30 April 1993 should be provided to the Secretary-General, subject to the concurrence of the Advisory Committee, that amount to be apportioned among Member States in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 47/224 A, since the Mission did not have a sufficient unencumbered balance to fund the extension.

87. It was further proposed that the General Assembly should urge the Secretary-General to give prompt attention to the request contained in resolution 47/224 B, which called for an urgent review of the current procedure for the planning of peace-keeping operations to enable the proper and timely launching of missions in a cost-effective and efficient manner.

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88. The Committee decided to recommend that, in order to provide for the continued maintenance of the Mission, the General Assembly should authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding $3,500,000 gross ($3,400,000 net) per month for the period 1 March to 30 April 1993 and to apportion the amount among Member States in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 47/224 A.

89. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to recommend that the General Assembly urge the Secretary-General to give prompt attention to the request made in resolution 47/224 B.

90. It was so decided.

91. Mr. SONGWE (Zimbabwe) thanked delegations for the flexibility they had shown in order to ensure that UNAVEM II would continue to be able to function with adequate funds in a difficult situation.

92. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 117, and he requested the Rapporteur to report thereon directly to the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 1.40 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION
Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
58th meeting
held on
Thursday, 25 March 1993
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 58th MEETING

Chairman: Ms. ROTHEISER (Vice-Chairman) (Austria)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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Comprehensive study of the question of honoraria payable to members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations

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10 August 1993

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In the absence of Mr. Dinu (Romania), Ms. Rotheiser (Austria), Vice-Chairman, took the chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 104: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.91 concerning agenda item 89 (a) (A/47/7/Add.14 and A/C.5/47/82)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to the statement submitted by the Secretary-General concerning the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.91 relating to the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) (A/C.5/47/82) and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) (A/47/7/Add.14). According to the statement submitted by the Secretary-General, should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.91, an additional appropriation in the amount of $15,989,000 would be required under section 34, Special expenses, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 (A/C.5/47/82, para. 16). The Advisory Committee, however, was not in favour of that course of action and recommended that the Secretary-General should be given commitment authority for an additional $200,000 to cover requirements through June 1993 and that actual requirements should be reported in the context of the second performance report for 1992-1993 (A/47/7/Add.14, para. 11). In that connection, he pointed out that in section XXIV of resolution 47/219, the General Assembly had decided to authorize the Secretary-General to commit funds, not to exceed $400,000, for the period 1 January through 28 February 1993, by advances from the Working Capital Fund, to cover all costs related to the provision of security and maintenance of the premises of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, as well as the costs of maintaining the existing staff members of the New York office of the Institute for whom placement was to be sought elsewhere within the United Nations system, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 42/197 of 11 December 1987. The Advisory Committee recommended that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, if it were to adopt the draft resolution, no additional appropriation would be required at the present time.

2. Mr. BOIN (France) said that his delegation had no problem with regard to the ACABQ recommendations. He wished to know, however, why the current market value of the UNITAR building had not been appraised and why the possibility of selling the building was not being considered.

3. Mr. FRANCIS (Australia) said that his delegation also supported the recommendations of ACABQ. He noted that paragraph 6 of the report of the Advisory Committee (A/47/7/Add.14) referred to savings in United Nations programme budgets since 1983. His delegation wished to know the nature of those savings and how they were recorded. The Secretariat should indicate whether they were an unencumbered balance and whether Member States had been consulted about them.

4. Mr. ONWUALIA (Nigeria) inquired whether the liaison officer referred to in paragraph 2 of draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.91 had been designated by the Secretary-General.

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5. Mr. BAUDOT (Controller) said that, according to paragraph 6 of its report, the Advisory Committee saw no reason why the cancellation of the UNITAR debt should require an additional appropriation and recommended further that the accounting problem caused by the UNITAR budget should be covered by an appropriate explanation in the accounts, taking into consideration the current value of the UNITAR building and land. If that recommendation was adopted, the UNITAR building and land would constitute an uncollectable asset for the regular budget of the United Nations. Another possibility was to decide that the regular budget had provided de facto subsidies to the Institute during the years in question. In the absence of voluntary contributions at a sufficient level to enable the Institute to function and since the General Assembly had not taken a decision to close UNITAR, advances had been provided from the regular budget. From a purely accounting point of view, those advances could be considered subsidies necessitated by the lack of voluntary contributions to ensure the financing of UNITAR.

6. If the UNITAR building became the property of the United Nations, there would be a need to meet the maintenance costs. Accordingly, it would be helpful if the commitment authority recommended by ACABQ included the expenditure requirements for the upkeep of the building itself covering the remainder of 1993.

7. In paragraph 2 of its report, the Advisory Committee pointed out that unless the General Assembly decided otherwise, the effective date for extrabudgetary funding would be the date on which the General Assembly adopted the draft resolution. Accordingly, unless the Fifth Committee explicitly indicated otherwise, the intent of the draft resolution and the recommendation of ACABQ to the Fifth Committee was that all the expenditure requirements of the Institute, other than those related to the transitional arrangements for the New York operations of UNITAR, should be met from the beginning of 1993 through extrabudgetary resources. Unless the Fifth Committee stated otherwise, there would be no authority to advance regular budget resources to UNITAR for any purpose other than its New York operations.

8. No liaison officer had been designated. He assumed that, since there were no indications to the contrary, paragraph 2 of draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.91 would be taken literally by the Secretary-General and that existing resources would be used. The liaison functions would be exercised from within the Secretariat.

9. Ms. MILLS (Deputy Controller) said that, since the real estate market in New York City was currently very depressed, it was unlikely that the United Nations would be able to recover the amounts expended for the UNITAR building and land. Accordingly, it would not be the wisest course of action to sell the building at the present time.

10. Mr. BAUDOT (Controller) said that, if the Fifth Committee followed the recommendations of ACABQ, it would have to resume consideration of the matter in June to give further commitment authority to maintain the building in proper condition. It was the understanding of the Secretariat that the regular budget would not be used to finance activities that were not related to the New York operations of UNITAR and the phasing out of the Institute in New York.

11. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, on the basis of the programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General, and on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.91, a commitment authority should be given to the Secretary-General for an additional $200,000 to cover requirements through June 1993 and actual requirements should be reported in the context of the annual performance report for 1992-1993 and that no additional appropriation would be required at the present time.

12. It was so decided.

13. Mrs. CLIFF (United Kingdom) welcomed the decision which had just been taken by the Committee and said that her delegation attached particular importance to paragraph 8 of the report of the Advisory Committee (A/47/7/Add.14).

Revised estimates under section 37: Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament (A/47/7/Add.13 and A/C.5/47/62)

14. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the report of the Secretary-General on the revised estimates under section 37 (A/C.5/47/62) and the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/47/7/Add.13).

15. Mr. BOIN (France) said that in resolution 46/37 F the General Assembly had created a dangerous precedent in deciding that the administrative costs of the Regional Centres should be financed from the regular budget. Serious consideration should be given to the question of whether that type of financing should be maintained. The report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/47/62) focused largely on administrative activities. A specific definition of the operational activities of the centres would be appreciated. The report indicated that the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa required the services of 10 locally recruited staff, including two drivers and four watchmen/cleaners (two each for the Centre and the Director's residence). In view of the budget constraints currently facing all countries, that seemed somewhat excessive.

16. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that he fully supported the views expressed by the representative of France and noted that in 1991 the Secretary-General had been asked to provide a detailed breakdown of the administrative costs of the Regional Centres. His delegation considered those costs excessive and hoped that the Secretary-General would continue his efforts to reduce them.

17. The Committee approved an additional appropriation in the amount of $150,000 under section 37 of the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993, subject to the guidelines for the use and operation of the contingency fund, to provide for the administrative support of the Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament.

Granting of travel assistance to least developed and other developing countries that are members of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (continued) (A/C.5/47/CRP.1)

18. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the note by the Secretary-General on the granting of travel assistance to least developed and other developing countries that were members of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) (A/C.5/47/CRP.1) and suggested that a decision should be taken at a later date following informal consultations.

19. It was so decided.

Comprehensive study of the question of honoraria payable to members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations (A/C.5/46/12; A/C.5/47/45; A/46/7/Add.8; and A/47/7/Add.10)

20. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the reports by the Secretary-General on the question of honoraria payable to members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations (A/C.5/46/12 and A/C.5/47/45) and the related reports of ACABQ (A/46/7/Add.8 and A/47/7/Add.10).

21. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) recalled that his delegation had proposed that the honoraria should be reduced to $1 per year. It had withdrawn that proposal in view of the lack of support, but felt strongly that the current rates should not be raised.

22. Mr. RAE (India) suggested that the Committee should adopt the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the matter.

23. Mr. CHUINKAM (Cameroon) said that his delegation would find it difficult to support an increase in the honoraria and noted that, if the Committee wished to be guided by the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, it should also consider whether there were other United Nations bodies which also merited such honoraria.

24. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco) associated himself with the Cameroonian representative's views regarding other United Nations bodies. However, the Committee should at least adopt the Advisory Committee's recommendation with regard to the cases before it.

25. Mr. DJACTA (Algeria) said that his delegation would be prepared to accept that solution.

26. Mr. FRANCIS (Australia) said that his delegation felt some concern with respect to increasing the honoraria and thought that consideration of the question should at least be deferred. It would like to know what effect approving the increases would have on other United Nations bodies and would welcome a report by the Secretary-General on that question.

27. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco) said that the question of the granting of travel assistance to members of UNCITRAL was relevant to a general decision of principle on the question of honoraria and suggested that informal consultations should be held on the two questions together.

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28. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) said that his delegation saw no connection between the two questions and felt that the informal discussions on them should be kept separate. The six United Nations bodies for which honoraria were paid had been dealt with on an exceptional basis; there were other bodies which worked much harder and for much longer periods of time which received no honoraria. That disparity should be taken into account before any comprehensive decision was taken. Moreover, as the honoraria had been decided on in all six cases as an exceptional measure, his delegation saw no justification for a blanket increase of 25 per cent and would be reluctant to approve such a decision.

29. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) pointed out that when the issue of UNCITRAL had been dealt with in 1992 other proposals had been made, and said that his delegation intended to put its own proposals forward again. He also suggested that if the honoraria were to be raised by 25 per cent then the additional 40 per cent in travel and subsistence allowance currently received by members of the six bodies concerned should be eliminated.

30. Mr. ALVAREZ (Uruguay) felt that the two questions relating to UNCITRAL and honoraria should be dealt with separately.

31. Mr. DUHALT (Mexico) supported the suggestion that separate informal consultations should be held.

32. Mrs. CLIFF (United Kingdom) asked whether all the representatives entitled to honoraria actually accepted them and whether the proposal contained in document A/C.5/47/CRP.1 constituted a formal proposal by the Secretary-General.

33. Mr. BAUDOT (Controller) said it was his understanding that document A/C.5/47/CRP.1 was intended as an information paper and that paragraphs 16-19 of that paper were intended only to clarify the issue. He would try to provide information on the other question asked by the United Kingdom representative at a later date.

34. The CHAIRMAN suggested that informal consultations should be held on the question before any decision was taken.

35. It was so decided.

Conditions of service and compensation for members of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/C.5/46/17 and A/C.5/45/75)

36. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, since the question of conditions of service and compensation for members of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) had been on the agenda of the Fifth Committee for the past two years, it was now time to take a final decision on it.

37. Mr. GIUFFRIDA (Italy) said he believed that the matter must be considered in conjunction with the report on the functioning of JIU and should therefore be postponed until the forty-eighth session.

38. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that the issue was a minor one and should never have come before the Fifth Committee. He proposed that the Committee should take no further action on it.

39. Mr. BOIN (France) supported the Chairman's suggestion. The question under discussion was entirely separate from that of the functioning of JIU and should not be connected with it. Moreover, it involved an important issue, that of the degradation of the conditions of service of members of the international civil service and the devaluation of the work of JIU.

40. Mrs. LIANIDOU (Greece) supported the proposal that consideration of the question should be postponed until the forty-eighth session.

41. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that his delegation in no way intended to devalue the work of JIU. However, it felt strongly that the proposal for an increase in the remuneration of the members of JIU was inappropriate at the present time.

42. He asked what the net salary of JIU officials was at present and what it would be if the proposed increase took effect. He would also like information regarding the views of the governing bodies of the other organizations which had been consulted on the question.

43. Mr. DUVAL (Programme Planning and Budget Division) said that the current annual remuneration for staff members at step IV of the D-2 level was $131,552. If the General Assembly approved the proposal for an increase in the remuneration of members of JIU to step VI of the D-2 level, their remuneration would rise to $136,399. Replying to the second question put by the United States representative, he said that article 14 of the Statute of the Joint Inspection Unit would have to be amended and the amendment submitted to the other organizations of the common system for approval.

44. Mr. FRANCIS (Australia) endorsed the proposal that consideration of the question should be deferred. Doubts had been expressed about the role of JIU and a review of its operations was expected to be undertaken at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. In the circumstances, it would be inappropriate to consider the question of increased honoraria at the current time.

45. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that it would be useful to know whether the remuneration levels indicated by the Secretariat were net figures excluding allowances and other benefits. He would welcome from the Secretariat an estimate of the cash value of such benefits.

46. His delegation did not think that it would be worthwhile to reopen the question of amending the Statute of JIU since more formal proposals were then likely to be made, for example a proposal that the number of inspectors should be reduced.

47. Mr. GIUFFRIDA (Italy) said that his earlier proposal had been aimed at achieving a fair compromise. He nevertheless supported the current proposal for a general review of the role and Statute of JIU. That was a matter for negotiation, however, and it would be better to postpone further consideration of the matter until the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

48. Mr. DUVAL (Programme Planning and Budget Division), replying to the question asked by the representative of the United States of America, said that the figures he had indicated were, indeed, net. He was not in a position to provide an estimate of the cash value of the benefits received by members of JIU at the current meeting, but would do so later.

49. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it take no action at the present time on the question of conditions of service for members of the Joint Inspection Unit and decide to review it in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

50. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that the Committee should try to dispose of the item without further delay. He saw no reason why the honoraria payable to the members of JIU should be increased at the current time and the Committee should be bold enough to say so.

51. Mr. STITT (United Kingdom) expressed concern at the proposal that the question should be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget. The relationship between the regular budget and the costs of JIU, which appeared under the rubric of special expenses, was a very complex one. It would therefore be unwise to inject a question of principle into the issue of remuneration levels for inspectors of JIU. If the matter could not be resolved at the current session, then he would reluctantly agree that it should be deferred until the following session, but not in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

52. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, in view of the difficulty in reaching a consensus in the Committee, the matter should be discussed in informal consultations.

53. Mr. MÜNCH (Germany) endorsed the proposal put forward by the representative of Italy and supported by the representative of Greece, which provided a solid basis for consensus.

54. Mr. BAZABIDILA (Congo) said that his delegation would welcome any information on previous reviews of the honoraria payable to members of JIU. Such information could constitute a useful basis for taking a decision on the matter. He would have difficulty, however, in supporting proposals to consider increased salaries for officials when no decisions had yet been reached on other pending matters, particularly the question of travel assistance to least developed and other developing countries that were members of UNCITRAL to enable them to participate in the sessions of the Commission and its working groups.

55. Mr. DUHALT (Mexico) said that he saw no contradiction between the position of those delegations which were in favour of deferring consideration of increased honoraria for members of JIU until the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly and those which wished to hold salaries at their current level. Postponement of consideration of the question, which he supported, meant that honoraria would remain at their current levels. In view of the Committee's heavy agenda, his delegation would agree only reluctantly to informal consultations on the matter.

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56. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco) questioned the wisdom of referring so many issues to informal consultations. The Committee was in fact close to a consensus and his delegation therefore supported the proposal that consideration of the matter should be deferred until the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

57. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that he was not in favour of the matter being taken up again at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. He would nevertheless go along with the proposal for a general review of the matter to be carried out under the agenda item on JIU, at which time other proposals could be made, for instance a proposal for a reduction in the number of inspectors. In that connection, he would welcome information from the Secretariat on the number of reports prepared by JIU in each of the previous five years. While the Unit's productivity could not be measured in terms of the number of reports it produced, that number seemed to have declined in recent years.

58. Mr. BOIN (France) said that he was in favour of deferring consideration of the matter until the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly in the context of an overall review of the role of JIU. He did not think that informal consultations at the current stage would make the best use of the Committee's time.

59. Mr. NDOBOLI (Uganda) supported the proposal that consideration of the question should be deferred until the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. That would be preferable to holding informal consultations on the matter at the current session, since the already crowded agenda imposed particular burdens on small delegations such as his.

60. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it should postpone consideration of the question of conditions of service and compensation for members of JIU until its forty-eighth session and review it in the context of the item on the Joint Inspection Unit.

61. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION
Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
59th meeting
held on
Monday, 29 March 1993
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 59TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. DINU (Romania)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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AGENDA ITEM 104: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued)*

Revised estimates as requested by the General Assembly in resolution 47/212

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* Items considered together.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 103: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 104: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued)

Revised estimates as requested by the General Assembly in resolution 47/212 (A/47/7/Add.15; A/C.5/47/88)

1. Mr. BAUDOT (Controller) said that, although it was unusual, the submission of revised estimates during the second year of the current biennium was justified owing to the scale of the changes resulting from the restructuring. The report of the Secretary-General dealt with the reasons that had led to the establishment of three new departments to replace the Department of Economic and Social Development, the functions of those new units, the resources which they would need, the redeployment of functions and posts that would result from the regrouping of the activities in that sector, the implications of that reorganization for other departments and, lastly, the changes planned in the area of common services. The General Assembly was invited to take a decision on the revised appropriation for the biennium 1992-1993 (which would have no impact on contributions), the distribution of that amount according to chapter, and the number and distribution of high-level posts. The General Assembly was also invited to express its views on the restructuring.

2. Referring to the financial aspects of the report of the Secretary-General, the Controller pointed out that the Secretariat had proceeded on the basis of the revised estimates approved by the General Assembly in December 1992, which had amounted to $2,468,039,000. The new amount was lower than that figure by $263,400; the net reduction resulted from: a decrease of $4,516,000 in the area of high-level posts, an increase of $1,511,200 for new activities resulting from the Rio Conference, an increase of $757,800 corresponding to the application, as of 1 April 1993, of different salaries for staff members whose posts would be redeployed and, lastly, an increase of $1,983,700 representing the costs of redeploying those staff members. The amounts were based on very prudent assumptions, which had been discussed with the Advisory Committee, and the Secretary-General intended to try to reduce the costs further. With regard to the three new departments, the estimated resources were the following: $16,591,300 for the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, $16,664,700 for the Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, and $10,843,500 for the Department of Development Support and Management Services.

3. The proposals by the Secretary-General concerning the posts included in the regular budget were in keeping with the policy guideline followed since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 41/213, which was characterized by extreme restraint with regard to the creation of posts. Prior to the 15 per cent reduction requested under the resolution, the Secretariat had had 11,422 posts (biennium 1988-1989). That figure had fallen to 10,048 for the biennium 1990-1991 and had been set at 10,118 for the biennium 1992-1993 and was established at 10,105 under the new revised estimates. Furthermore, there was a proposal to reduce to 35 the number of high-level posts, of which there had been 57 in the biennium 1988-1989.

/...

(Mr. Baudot)

4. Within the framework of that policy and in order to ensure the desired flexibility, the Secretariat had progressively systematized, starting in 1992, the temporary redeployment of posts. During the first restructuring phase, 74 vacant posts had been placed at the disposal of the Secretary-General. During the second phase, 23 posts had been placed at the disposal of services that urgently required an increase in staff. As of 29 March, 55 posts had been temporarily redeployed to units dealing with human rights, peace-keeping and the like. The redeployment carried out within the economic and social sector and common services sector had made it possible to find resources for new activities without requesting the creation of posts. Thus, of the 13 posts in the former Department of Economic and Social Development which were planned to be assigned to activities concerning desertification and climate change, two had been redeployed temporarily to the Department of Administration and Management. In total, the planned redeployment of posts would affect 9 per cent of all Secretariat posts. The proportion amounted to 53 per cent for activities in the economic and social sector covered under section IV of the budget and 21 per cent if the sector was considered as a whole, including the regional commissions which were not affected by redeployment. For most of the holders of those posts, the activities would remain the same, but they would have new superiors. With regard to common services, the proposed redeployment (from the Department of Administration and Management to the Department of Public Information) represented only 4 per cent of the posts.

5. In total, 146 posts would be redeployed from one duty station to another: 59 from Vienna to New York (Social development), 27 from Rome to New York (World Food Council), 2 from Geneva to New York (Sustainable development), 42 from New York to Geneva (Transnational corporations and science and technology), and 16 from New York to Vienna (Peaceful uses of outer space).

6. The distribution of the posts on the staffing tables of the three new departments was set forth in table III in the report of the Secretary-General. Referring to the figures that were indicated there and represented a total of 696 posts, he recalled that the corresponding figure had been 709 under the programme budget approved for the biennium and 683 under the revised estimates adopted at the end of 1992. Accordingly, there was no significant change in that regard.

7. Because of a number of uncertainties, including the results of the decentralization efforts, the revised estimates were not very detailed with regard to the distribution of extrabudgetary posts. Nevertheless, the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development (DPCSD) would probably not have any post in that category. On the other hand, the Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis (DESIPA) should have 40 Professional and 75 General Service category posts. Sixty-five Professional and 88 General Service category posts financed through extrabudgetary funds would be transferred to the Department of Development Support and Management Services (DDSMS). Assigning the Office for Project Services (OPS) to DDSMS would also provide it with 86 Professional and 137 General Service category posts (para. 104). Without taking account of the 34 L-7 posts referred to in paragraph 108 of the report of the Secretary-General, which would be broken down shortly, DDSMS would have a total of 566 posts and DESIPA a total of 392 posts.

(Mr. Baudot)

Those figures reflected the great importance attached to economic and social activities.

8. The proposals by the Secretary-General concerning high-level posts were set forth in a precise manner in table I and paragraphs 7 to 17 of his report.

9. In view of the preparation of the revised estimates under consideration, the General Assembly had agreed that the draft programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 should be submitted later than initially planned. The revised amount of $2,467,775,800 which the General Assembly was invited to approve under the revised estimates would serve as the basis for preparing the draft programme budget (including the calculation of the growth rate). The results of the restructuring would be reflected in that document, including the internal organization of the new departments, their activities and the links between them and the medium-term plan, the modalities for integrating the Office for Project Services (OPS) into DDSMS and the social development activities of DPCSD, the exact size of the economies of scale referred to in document A/C.5/47/88 and the decentralization efforts.

10. With regard to posts, the Secretariat would continue the policy of simplifying the policy-formulating levels. In accordance with the assumption made by the Secretariat in order to draw up the outline of the draft programme budget, it would try to make corrections so as not to have to request a net increase in the number of posts. He hoped to be able to reduce progressively the weight of the common services through, inter alia, the implementation of the integrated management system. The Secretariat would continue to strive for greater flexibility in utilizing posts and organizing the careers of staff members. Lastly, the redeployments currently proposed on a temporary basis would be proposed on a permanent basis. An effort would be made to illustrate better the connection between activities adopted and priorities set as well as the complementarity linkages between budgetary and extrabudgetary resources. The question of L-category posts would also be dealt with.

11. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's report (A/47/7/Add.15), said that ACABQ had not thought it essential to comment on every aspect of the Secretary-General's report. It had formulated its comments in a constructive spirit with a view to their being taken into account by the Secretary-General when he prepared his proposals for the biennium 1994-1995.

12. Paragraph 5 of the ACABQ report referred to the Advisory Committee's late receipt of the Secretary-General's report. Such occurrences were becoming increasingly frequent, even when the dates of submission had been confirmed to the Committee. Moreover, all too often the Secretariat set deadlines without sufficient regard for the time required by ACABQ and the Fifth Committee to consider the documents, thereby threatening to undermine the roles played by the two bodies.

13. Paragraph 6 of the ACABQ report reflected observations made on various occasions. A related question was the extent to which Member States were being consulted and the status of changes referred to in the relevant reports, namely whether they were decisions or proposals placed before Member States.

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14. In spite of numerous reports and statements by the Secretary-General, it was difficult to know exactly what the restructuring involved. There was an overall impression of a piecemeal approach, when what was required was an overall restructuring plan consisting of a set of coordinated, well-thought-out measures to be taken in the context of a time-frame. He had no wish to enter into a discussion of whether reform should be a continuous process, but he would stress that the need for a restructuring plan, together with a time-frame, was not incompatible with the necessity for an ongoing evaluation of the administrative and management structures of the Secretariat.

15. Paragraph 7 of the ACABQ report distinguished between external consultants without inside knowledge of the Organization and experts with an intimate knowledge of it. The proposals of the former were often more attractive in theory than in practice. ACABQ cautioned against over-reliance on their expertise and recommended that account should be taken instead of the considerable in-house expertise.

16. As paragraphs 9 to 15 of its report explained, ACABQ had had difficulty in analysing the implications of the Secretary-General's proposals for a number of reasons relating to the format and presentation of the document in which they were set out. Neither policy nor budgetary matters were treated in a fully transparent way. Although the document dealt with estimates, it did not give a full description of programmes and related mandates. Among its other shortcomings, the document lacked information on the distribution of resources and subprogrammes by department and information on the internal structures of departments. From the beginning of the restructuring, the orderly presentation of sections and related estimates had been disrupted: for example, the various categories of costs shown in table II of the Secretary-General's report related to differing periods within the current biennium (A/47/7/Add.15, para. 15).

17. For the reasons given in paragraph 15 of its report, ACABQ considered that it was not possible to evaluate the financial effects of the restructuring. The Secretary-General's report showed a saving of $263,400 compared with the amount approved by the General Assembly in December 1992, but it failed to take into account potential costs arising from the transfer of posts over and above the estimate of $2 million for that purpose (A/47/7/Add.15, paras. 25-27). The necessary budgetary information would not be available until the Secretary-General made his proposals for the biennium 1994-1995. Again, ACABQ stressed the role played by other intergovernmental bodies, including CPC, in reviewing the programmatic aspects of the budget.

18. The Advisory Committee's comments on the changes in organizational structure proposed by the Secretary-General should not be construed as a rejection of those proposals. As was stated in paragraph 23 of its report, it was for the General Assembly to decide on the best way of proceeding with regard to the transfer of functions between duty stations. ACABQ, for its part, believed that a more adequate explanation of rationale was required.

19. The establishment of three new departments called for a sustained effort of coordination, particularly in assigning the functions of policy development and policy analysis to two of the departments. How the functions formerly assigned to the Director-General would be discharged also needed elaboration. Since the

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Secretary-General considered decentralization an important part of restructuring, the activities for decentralization would have to be identified.

20. For the reasons given in paragraph 28 of its report, ACABQ welcomed the overall objective of the Secretary-General's proposal to integrate the Office for Project Services of UNDP into the new Department of Development Support and Management Services. Before the measure could take effect, however, there were questions to be answered regarding the respective roles of the UNDP Governing Council and the General Assembly. The Advisory Committee trusted that its views would be taken into account when the Secretary-General's proposal and the modalities for its implementation were considered.

21. Little information had been given about the changes in the Department of Administration and Management, and the report by a consultant on reforms in that Department had not been made available to ACABQ. Moreover, ACABQ understood that the proposals of the Secretary-General referred to in paragraph 33 of its report needed refinement, and it had requested that the Secretary-General indicate in his proposals for 1994-1995 the results of any such refinement.

22. Some significant issues remained with respect to the administration and management of peace-keeping operations. ACABQ once again requested the Secretary-General to deal with those issues on an urgent basis (A/47/7/Add.15, para. 34).

23. On the question of vacancy management, the Advisory Committee maintained the position it had expressed in 1992 in document A/47/7/Add.1. In addition, the representatives of the Secretary-General had reiterated to ACABQ their intention to report at six-monthly intervals regarding the situation of posts that had been temporarily redeployed among budget sections (A/47/7/Add.15, paras. 35 and 36).

24. Paragraph 37 of the ACABQ report indicated that there had been 57 high-level posts before the implementation of the relevant recommendation of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts and that the revised estimates considered in 1992 had provided for 36, with ITC being included in both figures. The Secretary-General's current proposal would result in a net reduction of three more high-level posts, excluding the ITC post. The Secretary-General was also seeking to retain the resources for three eliminated Assistant Secretary-General posts.

25. With respect to the downgrading to the D-2 level of the post at the head of the ITC secretariat, ACABQ considered that decisions of the General Assembly and GATT were required before action could be taken. As to the reduction of extrabudgetary posts, ACABQ trusted that the operational needs of the programmes would be taken into account.

26. The Advisory Committee, having often questioned the justification for a number of high-level posts, welcomed the Secretary-General's efforts to streamline the senior management structure of the Secretariat. In its view, however, the abolition of such posts deserved to be explained as carefully as their creation had been. It would therefore have expected each of the proposals for abolition in documents A/C.5/47/2 and Corr.1 and A/C.5/47/88 to be justified

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at greater length. With regard to the four high-level posts in the Department of Administration and Management, it was recommending that action should be deferred to enable the Secretary-General to review the matter in the light of its comments and such guidelines as the General Assembly might wish to give (A/47/7/Add.15, paras. 41 and 42). The other proposals should be considered by the General Assembly pursuant to its resolution 47/212.

27. ACABQ had considered at length the proposal to establish a D-3 category, which was a technical matter of far-reaching implications, both long-term and system-wide. It was therefore important not to act precipitately and to consult the competent bodies first, especially as the proposal was not viable in its current form and, despite the arguments put forward by the Secretary-General on page 6 of circular ST/IC/1992/73, the purpose of the new category was unclear. ACABQ questioned how a limited number of D-3 posts would really improve the career prospects of international civil servants. If the objective was to clarify reporting lines, better ways could be found. If the aim was to compensate a few professionals for their managerial responsibilities, again a better way could be found. In the long run, the proposed new category could compromise the attempt to rationalize high-level posts and reduce their number, especially as there was no intention to eliminate the Assistant Secretary-General level completely. Lastly, it was not clear what was wrong with the current situation, in which there was a mix of career and short-term political appointees at the Assistant Secretary-General level.

28. In paragraph 15 of his report, the Secretary-General stated that he intended to make a further submission on the subject to the General Assembly and was proposing in the meantime that resources for three Assistant Secretary-General posts proposed for abolition should be retained in the budget. The Advisory Committee considered it unlikely that the resources would be required during the current biennium but had not recommended their deletion from the budget. Instead, ACABQ had requested the Secretary-General to take into account its views on the D-3 posts when he reviewed the question of the four high-level posts in the Department of Administration and Management (A/47/7/Add.15, paras. 42 and 48).

29. Mr. JARAMILLO (Colombia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said the Secretary-General's proposals must be examined in the light of resolution 46/232, whereby the General Assembly had reaffirmed that the reform process should be compatible with the execution of programme mandates assigned by deliberative bodies. The medium-term plan and the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade were particularly important in that regard. The reform process must also be consistent with General Assembly resolutions 45/264 and 46/235 on the revitalization of the United Nations in the social and economic fields. The programmes and priorities approved by the General Assembly should not be altered by the reform process; that implied the need to provide substantive support to the intergovernmental machinery and the strengthening of technical cooperation.

30. With respect to its pre-eminent concern - the integrated implementation of approved programmes - the Group of 77 wished to make a number of observations. The creation of three new departments to replace the Department of Economic and Social Development represented a step in the right direction, since it would

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result in a better division of labour between the competent services. However, the functions relating to the implementation of the New Agenda for the Development of Africa and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries were not clearly defined, despite the importance of those projects for the developing countries; it was essential to indicate which units would be responsible for these functions. There was also a need for a clearer division of labour among the units and bodies responsible for the delivery of technical cooperation - an action which implied a clearer definition of the role of the new Department for Development Support and Management Services and an increase, or at least not a decrease, in the level of sources devoted to those important purposes.

31. With respect to the transfer of functions in two high-priority sectors - transnational corporations and science and technology - to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), it was necessary to identify clearly the units that would be assigned the new functions and to choose the modalities that would ensure full implementation of the mandates deriving from the medium-term plan and the International Development Strategy for the Fourth Development Decade. Of particular importance in that connection were the science and technology functions performed by the governmental sector.

32. Regarding the eventual decentralization of activities relating to natural resources, water and energy, it was necessary to consider retaining at Headquarters a modified service capable of providing information about those questions on a world-wide basis.

33. The description of the functions of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development should contain precise definitions of the functions relating to climate change and desertification.

34. More complete information was needed regarding the reasons that had led the Secretary-General to propose eliminating the post of Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements. Whatever the final decision, the full implementation of the Centre's programme mandates should be ensured, and its intergovernmental body should continue to receive the necessary technical support.

35. Given the work carried out by the International Trade Centre in the promotion of exports from developing countries, the position of Director must be maintained at the rank of Assistant Secretary-General, and that post should be filled as soon as possible.

36. Transfers of functions between different duty stations must be adequately justified from the operational point of view. Decisions in those matters should not be permitted to prejudice the freely made decisions of Governments concerning intergovernmental bodies. Restructuring should also ensure that those bodies would receive adequate technical support from the Secretariat.

37. Another concern of the Group of 77 was to ensure that restructuring entailed no change in programmes approved by the General Assembly. To that end, the resolution to be adopted should take into account a few additional elements.

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38. First, the General Assembly had determined on several occasions that in matters of programme implementation, the least developed countries would have priority. Therefore, the reference to that priority in the list of functions of the Department for Development Support and Management Services could be misleading. In the case of countries in transition, the treatment foreseen by the General Assembly was completely different. The restructuring should take that fact into account.

39. Second, the functions of the Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis included, as part of the "monitoring and assessment from a global perspective of economic and social policies and trends", the "analysis of efficient domestic macroeconomic management". That might imply an infringement of the sovereignty of Member States, and that function should therefore be reformulated, with strict respect for the limits imposed by the Charter and the General Assembly.

40. Third, the designation by the Secretary-General of "United Nations representatives" was in conflict with the rules in force, according to which the Resident Coordinator represented the Organization at the national level but did not perform political representation functions. Because the United Nations was not itself a State, it was inappropriate to suggest that it could be represented politically vis-à-vis Member States. Furthermore, recent intergovernmental negotiations had revealed substantive disagreements regarding the concept of a "unified approach at the country level".

41. Mr. MARUYAMA (Japan) praised the Secretary-General for his efforts and expressed the hope that they would be continued in close consultation with Member States and in accordance with their decisions. As the Advisory Committee had recommended in paragraph 6 of its report, the restructuring must be carried out on the basis of a long-term plan and within a specific time-frame. His delegation recognized the prerogatives of the Secretary-General in his position as chief administrative officer of the Organization, but insisted that he should comply with the directives given by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213, 45/264, 46/232 and 47/212 and in the resolutions relating to the medium-term plan. It noted with concern that the Secretary-General's report had not shown in what way the proposed reform related to the envisaged redeployment of resources or how it would improve the implementation of existing programmes. The specialized bodies concerned must have an opportunity to examine fully the impact of restructuring on those programmes before the General Assembly began its consideration of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995; his delegation was ready to participate actively in that process.

42. Despite the reduction of 13 high-level posts during the first phase of restructuring, little would be saved in the current biennium, and his delegation concluded that the changes made were perhaps not cost neutral. It was therefore important to provide Member States with an estimate of the costs that those changes would imply for the 1994-1995 biennium. His delegation hoped that the economies of scale announced by the Secretary-General would be realized and believed that Member States should also examine the implications of restructuring for future biennial budgets. With regard to the supplementary information provided to the Advisory Committee by the Secretary-General's representatives, his delegation noted with satisfaction the objectives set out

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(Mr. Maruyama, Japan)

in paragraph 16 of the Advisory Committee's report. With respect to the preparation of a draft programme budget for the 1994-1995 biennium, his delegation would rely on the Secretary-General to continue to hold spending for his proposals within the limits of the general plan approved by the General Assembly during its forty-seventh session.

43. His delegation could support the creation of three departments at Headquarters to deal with economic and social issues, provided a number of conditions were met. First, the Secretary-General should be personally involved in the coordination of the activities of the three departments relating to policy formulation and implementation. Second, the Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development should remain of reasonable size and exercise its coordination function as primus inter pares among the departments, each department's respective area of competence being clearly defined. Third, the Office for Project Services could not be separated from UNDP unless the proposal was thoroughly discussed and the UNDP Governing Council took decisions regarding the autonomous character of the Office, the provision of continuing administrative support by UNDP and continuing supervision of the Office by the Governing Council.

44. Many proposals to transfer posts from one duty station to another lacked substantive or programmatic justification and were not in line with the relevant intergovernmental decisions. In particular, his delegation questioned the transfer of 59 posts from the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs at Vienna to New York, as well as the transfer of the Outer Space Affairs Division from New York to Vienna and the World Food Council from Rome to New York. He noted with concern that the Secretary-General also proposed transferring 55 posts from New York to UNCTAD at Geneva without indicating how they would be integrated into the UNCTAD structure. The Secretary-General had made clear neither the precise "critical mass" necessary to perform secretariat functions in the areas of transnational corporations and science and technology for development, nor the concrete use of those staff members who would be retained to work on sustainable development at UNCTAD. The Trade and Development Board, the Commission on Transnational Corporations and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development would each have to examine the desirability of such transfers in view of the resources necessary for the implementation of their priority programmes.

45. His delegation endorsed the observations and recommendations put forward by the Advisory Committee with regard to vacancy management, as well as the reduction and use of high-level posts, including the proposed D-3 positions. While he appreciated the efforts of the Secretary-General to streamline the senior management structure of the Secretariat, he could not support the downgrading of the four Assistant Secretary-General posts, particularly those of the Controller and the Chief of the Office of Human Resources Management. Such action would not be in keeping with the need to enhance the financial and managerial accountability of the Organization and the need to strengthen administrative support capabilities in response to the rapidly growing peace-keeping operations. Furthermore, his delegation cautioned against reducing extrabudgetary high-level posts without taking into account the specific duties performed by their incumbents, the hierarchical level required or the operational needs of the bodies concerned.

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46. His delegation shared the view of the Advisory Committee that it was a matter of urgency for the Secretary-General to deal with such aspects of restructuring as the strengthening of the Field Operations Division and coordination of management and administration of peace-keeping by the Secretariat components concerned, so as to improve the planning and budgeting procedures for such operations.

47. The Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it should maintain the overall level of appropriations it had approved in resolution 47/220, and that decisions on how the resources should actually be allocated to sections of the revised estimates should be subject to programmatic review of the relevant sections and programmes by the intergovernmental bodies concerned. Lastly, the Secretary-General should submit a definitive restructuring plan covering decentralization for the approval of the relevant intergovernmental bodies to serve as a basis on which to draw up a draft programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

48. Mr. HAAKONSEN (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the European Community and its member States, said they believed that it was the prerogative of the Secretary-General to determine the structure of the Secretariat. The initiatives taken by the Secretary-General were long overdue and derived in large part from the decisions adopted by the Conference on Environment and Development and the eighth session of UNCTAD.

49. The report was a difficult document to tackle owing to its technical presentation, and especially given its late submission. Despite the directives given by the General Assembly in resolutions 46/232 and 47/212, the report provided neither a clear overall perspective of the restructuring process nor a satisfactory account of either the programmatic implications and justifications of restructuring or of the financial implications. The European Community and its member States therefore shared the view of the Advisory Committee that it was difficult to evaluate the "global" allocation of resources and that the Secretary-General should provide more detailed information in his draft programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995. Specifically, they insisted that further information concerning the impact of restructuring on the programmes should be provided both to the Committee for Programme and Coordination when it considered the programme budget, and to other intergovernmental bodies. He hoped that the Secretary-General, when implementing the restructuring, would take fully into account the provisions of General Assembly resolution 47/214 concerning the establishment of a system of responsibility and accountability of programme managers.

50. The European Community and its member States were pleased to see that the process of restructuring under way had led to certain marginal savings. With respect to the Secretary-General's proposals concerning the economic and social sectors, they welcomed the approach adopted, but stressed the importance of ensuring optimum coordination of all the activities in those fields at Headquarters and elsewhere. They shared the concerns of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee in that regard and wished to know what initiatives the Secretary-General intended to take.

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(Mr. Haakonsen, Denmark)

51. With regard to the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development (DPCSD), the European Community and its member States welcomed the fact that the new department would be expected not only to prepare but also to implement the results of global conferences, and noted the proposal to integrate the World Food Council in DPCSD. They wished to know what the Secretary-General's plans were with regard to Habitat and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which would be placed under joint management. Lastly, with respect to the creation of the Department for Development Support and Management Services, the European Community and its member States, as donors, wished to know what implications that would have for UNDP and other voluntarily funded agencies; he wished to stress the importance of maintaining the flexibility and efficiency of the Office of Project Services and its semi-autonomous and self-financing character.

52. With regard to decentralization, and in particular the possibility of assigning certain Headquarters functions to the regional economic commissions, it was important, before any decisions were taken along those lines, to ensure that the commissions in question had attained the necessary level of efficiency and effectiveness.

53. The European Community and its member States, which were well-known supporters of a unified United Nations presence at the country level and had strongly supported resolution 47/199, concurred with the Advisory Committee that it was important to conduct full consultations with Member States with respect to all issues related to the role of the United Nations representative. Regarding the proposal to move the Field Operations Division from the Office of General Services to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General, he recalled that on the adoption of resolution 47/224, the European Community and its member States had stressed the urgent need for more effective planning of peace-keeping operations as well as an improvement of budgetary information and presentation. The European Community and its member States, encouraged by the first two rounds of informal consultations held at their initiative, fully endorsed the comments of the Advisory Committee, which in paragraph 34 of its report requested the Secretary-General to deal with those issues on an urgent basis.

54. He noted that, compared to the proposals for high-level posts contained in document A/C.5/47/2 and Corr.1, the new provisions would entail a further reduction of three high-level posts. Although the European Community and its member States were in principle hesitant about commenting on such decisions by the Secretary-General, they felt it necessary in the current case to voice certain concerns regarding the Department of Administration and Management. In view of the important supervisory functions of that Department, its senior officials should have a degree of authority equivalent to that of their colleagues in other important areas of the Organization, and the European Community and its member States therefore supported the recommendation of the Advisory Committee that action on the Secretary-General's proposal regarding the high-level posts in that Department should be deferred until the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. Regarding the possible introduction of a senior career level above D-2, the issue was complex and should be studied further, in particular by the International Civil Service Commission, as recommended by the Advisory Committee.

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(Mr. Haakonsen, Denmark)

55. Stressing that his comments on behalf of the European Community and its member States had been voiced in a constructive spirit, he commended the Secretary-General for his efforts and stressed that restructuring should be implemented within a clearly limited time-frame and in accordance with the principles set forth in resolution 46/232.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION
Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
60th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 30 March 1993
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 60th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. DINU (Romania)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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Revised estimates as requested by the General Assembly in resolution 47/212 (continued)

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* Items considered together.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 103: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 104: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued)

Revised estimates as requested by the General Assembly in resolution 47/212 (continued) (A/C.5/47/88 and A/47/7/Add.15; A/C.5/47/92)

1. Mr. DADZIE (Special Adviser and Delegate of the Secretary-General) said that the Secretary-General, who attached the greatest importance to dialogue with Member States on the restructuring process, had on many occasions shared his views and plans with them: through his participation in the high-level debate in the Economic and Social Council, his report on the work of the Organization and his statements to the plenary General Assembly and the Fifth Committee, and in consultations with many delegations. His purpose had been to explain his approach as restructuring took shape, to stimulate reflection and to elicit the reactions of Member States. He (Mr. Dadzie) would recapitulate the main clarifications provided by the Secretary-General during informal consultations concerning the principles and practical modalities of the reorganization.

2. The Secretary-General believed that the United Nations should accord the same importance to its activities and responsibilities in the economic and social sectors as to those in the political and security area. In that respect, it should, in accordance with the guidelines offered by intergovernmental bodies and under the leadership of the Economic and Social Council, take full advantage of its coordinating capacity and its intersectoral capabilities and place all its operational capabilities at the service of its policy objectives, seeking to ensure that its various areas of activity supported and reinforced each other.

3. That vision required the streamlining of the relevant intergovernmental machinery and a dynamic and well-organized Secretariat, with a clear chain of command, which could attract high-quality staff - and would therefore be better prepared to promote dialogue and cooperation with other institutions in the economic, social and environmental fields.

4. The Member States expected the Secretariat to provide information, ideas and practical advice to assist them in formulating their strategies and they hoped to derive more benefit from the impact of its operational activities. One of the key objectives of reorganization was therefore to reverse the trend towards fragmentation and compartmentalization, which only led to waste and inefficiency, by regrouping activities of a similar nature under a unified leadership. In that spirit, drawing on the work carried out by the high-level Panel of Independent Advisers which he had established to assist him, the Secretary-General had envisaged three clusters of functions and entrusted each of them to a new department: first, substantive support for policy-making and coordination, following up the implementation of Agenda 21 and support for the Commission on Sustainable Development; second, data collection and development and policy analysis; and, lastly, technical cooperation, which would be carried out from Headquarters.

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(Mr. Dadzie)

5. The Secretary-General had decided to establish the three new departments in December 1992; their terms of reference were set forth in his report (A/C.5/47/88). In line with the General Assembly's desire for an integrated approach to economic and social issues, responsibility for all those questions, and for policy formulation, was entrusted to the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development. That Department was also responsible for coordinating the implementation of strategies and programmes within its purview, particularly the ambitious projects relating to Africa and the least developed countries, which went well beyond technical cooperation and required action by various United Nations entities. That responsibility would be entrusted to a specific unit within the Department, which would be strengthened for the purpose.

6. With regard to the Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, it should be noted that its research on economic policies, the role of the public and private sectors, market mechanisms and the promotion of entrepreneurial initiative and competitiveness would focus, not on advocating particular models, but rather on providing Governments with a comparative analysis of national experiences which might assist them in their decision-making.

7. The Department of Development Support and Management Services was responsible, *inter alia*, for technical cooperation activities. The emphasis was placed on assistance to the least developed countries and to economies in transition, in accordance with certain recent resolutions, but the determination of priorities would clearly continue to be the prerogative of Governments. The incorporation of the Office for Project Services into the Department was intended to respond to concerns about the compatibility of its functions with the primary purpose of UNDP and to enable it to operate efficiently and in a cost-effective and autonomous manner.

8. There must, of course, be effective coordination among the new Departments and between them and other entities away from Headquarters. The Secretary-General fully recognized that imperative, and would draw primarily on the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development. He intended to establish a number of internal coordination mechanisms over which he himself would preside as necessary: meetings of heads of the new Departments, for example, and meetings, at key phases of the programme planning process, of all the entities concerned. He would also maintain the existing system of meetings involving the executive secretaries of the regional commissions, as well as coordination meetings, prior to meetings of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, with the heads of departments and programmes.

9. The activities and programmes related to science and technology and to transnational corporations were chief among those affected by the reallocation of responsibilities between the departments based in New York and entities away from Headquarters. With regard to the redeployment of those activities to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Secretary-General confirmed that the critical mass of capacities for research and analysis and for technical cooperation would be maintained intact, and, indeed, that the two Commissions concerned, as well as the Trade and Development Board, would benefit from the redeployment.

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(Mr. Dadzie)

10. The question of decentralization to the regional commissions had also been the subject of comment. The Secretary-General had in mind a more effective distribution of responsibilities between global and regional entities which would take full account of the characteristics of each. The decentralization process would therefore be pursued in a pragmatic manner, taking into account the requirements of each Commission and such criteria as cost-effectiveness and the availability of specific expertise, information and multi-sectoral disciplines.

11. It might be useful to clarify the Secretary-General's approach regarding United Nations representation at the country level and the role of resident coordinators. The Secretary-General's objectives were to integrate, at the country level, the various programmes coming under his direct authority, without compromising their distinctiveness, and to strengthen the role of the resident coordinator in support of the development goals of the country concerned. That approach accorded with the views developed by the General Assembly in resolution 47/199, which would guide the Secretary-General in the further evolution and application of his thinking.

12. Finally, as regards the economic and social sectors, he wished to answer the question frequently raised as to the time-frame for the restructuring. Aware of the disturbances which that type of operation inevitably caused, the Secretary-General had no intention of prolonging the process. He did, however, indicate that both decentralization and incorporation of the Office for Project Services in the Department of Development Support and Management Services required decisions of legislative bodies which could not be taken until the end of the year.

13. An effective Department of Administration and Management was a *sine qua non* for the effective functioning of the Organization. Analysis of tasks to be accomplished and of their interrelationships had allowed the Secretary-General to focus on a clear set of objectives. There was a need to rethink administration and management in order to make then tools that would be more transparent, flexible and accountable to the Secretariat itself and to the Member States. That assumed a consolidation of related activities within a single department to deal rationally with all budgetary, personnel, general service, and conference servicing issues. In that area, as in all others, the objective was a more rational use of resources designed to ensure improved performance and, concomitantly, to enhance the quality of the services.

14. Administration and management of peace-keeping operations were becoming increasingly complex with each Security Council resolution, as the Secretary-General was acutely aware. He was currently taking steps to strengthen the Organization's capability in that regard. The results of those measures and of any additional improvement in the functioning of the Department of Administration and Management would be reflected in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

15. The Secretary-General had stated, in particular in the Fifth Committee, his commitment to doing everything in his power to strengthen the international civil service. Since the independence of the international civil service depended on a clear differentiation between political and career appointments, he was studying the possibility of introducing a D-3 level. In the light of

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(Mr. Dadzie)

consultations and an analysis he had requested from outside experts, he planned, as his report indicated, to submit to the General Assembly, in due course, a formal proposal naturally taking into account the views expressed by the Advisory Committee and the Member States.

16. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the members of the Committee to the letter of 29 March 1993 which the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences had addressed to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee (A/C.5/47/92).

17. Mr. McKINNON (New Zealand), speaking on behalf of Australia, Canada and New Zealand, welcomed the efforts of the Secretary-General to reconfigure the social and economic sectors of the Secretariat as a means of improving the quality of services to the Member States. Just as the Secretary-General, as Chief Administrative Officer of the Organization, was responsible for proposing cost-effective ways of restructuring the Secretariat, so the General Assembly was responsible for establishing the budget and programming the activities of the Organization. Regrettably, the information presented in document A/C.5/47/88 did not permit a full analysis of the financial and programmatic impact of the restructuring proposals and, specifically, an evaluation of the "global" allocation of resources among and within departments.

18. The three delegations were pleased to see that the downward revision of the budget appropriation for the 1992-1993 biennium reflected a reduction of $263,400 and that it had been possible to finance costs of over $1.5 million relating to UNCED follow-up without recourse to the Contingency Fund. They also noted that any further duplications and redundancies among the various units of the Secretariat would be eliminated in the context of the planning and preparation of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995. For this, a precise outline of new administrative structures and corresponding resources would be needed. If, as the Advisory Committee had recommended, the Secretary-General produced an overall restructuring plan outlining specific measures to be taken in the context of a time-frame, the Member States would be better able to evaluate proposed changes to the administrative and management structures of the Secretariat.

19. That being said, and conditional upon the following observations, the three delegations were ready to approve the revised appropriation of $2,467,775,800 and the corresponding resource transfers between budget sections during implementation of the second phase of Secretariat restructuring.

20. The new Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, entrusted with tasks relating to policy development and coordination of substantive services for central intergovernmental bodies, should specifically ensure the implementation of the new mandates entrusted to the Organization including preparations for the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and UNCED follow-up. In addition to providing secretariat services to the two Intergovernmental Negotiating Committees on climate change and desertification and to the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small-island Developing States, in resolution 47/191 the General Assembly had called for creation in that Department of a "clearly identifiable ... secretariat," responsible for monitoring the implementation of Agenda 21 and providing support services to the Commission on Sustainable Development. In the context of the 1994-1995 programme budget it would be

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(Mr. McKinnon, New Zealand)

necessary also to ensure adequate resources for other tasks mandated at UNCED, including the area of the law of the sea.

21. The creation of the Department of Development Support and Management Services should enhance the capacity of the United Nations to respond rapidly to the needs of developing countries. The three delegations welcomed the Secretary-General's assurance that he intended to maintain, in the context of future arrangements, the current efficiency and autonomous character of the UNDP Office for Project Services. For the near future, as a means of improving liaison between the Secretariat and delegations, it would be desirable for the latter to receive shortly an organizational chart of the three new Departments identifying relevant contact points.

22. With regard to the Department of Administration and Management, the three delegations supported the Secretary-General's proposal to create a limited number of D-3 posts equivalent in salary and entitlements to posts of Assistant Secretary-General. He deemed it particularly appropriate for the posts of the most senior officials of that Department, who were called on to implement key budget and human resource decisions and entrusted with responsibilities as important as those of senior officials in other departments to be graded at that level. None the less, the reduction in the number of high-level posts was meant to reduce fragmentation in the Department and to enhance managerial responsibility. The three delegations therefore shared the concern of the Advisory Committee that it would be difficult to prevent a proliferation of D-3 posts. It would be advisable to defer the issue until the International Civil Service Commission had been able to examine it further.

23. With respect to the proposed transfer of the Field Operations Division from the Office of General Services to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General, the three delegations believed that such a transfer might enhance the managerial capacity of the Under-Secretary-General. More generally, they endorsed the Advisory Committee's view that the question of the transfer should be reviewed in a broader context in order to take into account the Division's interaction with the financial and political aspects of peace-keeping operations. The three delegations had emphasized repeatedly the need for an overhaul of the Secretariat infrastructure and procedures to improve the operational response of the United Nations in the area of peace-keeping, and hoped that the report requested in section B of the ONUMOZ resolution might serve as a starting-point for further action in that regard.

24. With respect to the transfer of functions and posts to and from Headquarters, it should be borne in mind that the central objective of the reform exercise was improved support to Member States, including better and more integrated services to intergovernmental bodies; it was also important to keep in mind that aspects of the reform process, (decentralization, regionalization, and enhanced field presence) had still to be addressed. Against that background, the three delegations would wish to examine issues relating to the United Nations Office at Vienna.

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25. Mr. BREITENSTEIN (Finland), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that the United Nations had two basic functions of equal importance, the maintenance of international peace and security, and the promotion of economic and social development in the broadest sense, including respect for human rights. The Nordic countries wished to express their general support for the proposals made and the steps taken so far by the Secretary-General in his capacity as chief executive to reform the economic and social sectors by creating more manageable departments.

26. The Nordic countries had participated actively in the discussion about the reform process. In the area of operational activities for development, they had emphasized the need for a more precise division of responsibilities between the Secretariat and the various funds and programmes. They therefore had reservations about the transfer of the UNDP Office for Projects Services (OPS) to the new Department of Development Support and Management Services. They looked forward to the detailed report requested by the Advisory Committee on the modalities of the proposed transfer.

27. It was the task of the Secretariat to make recommendations for the normative functions of the United Nations in the economic and social fields. Operational functions should be performed by other bodies such as the funds and programmes of the United Nations system, with the support of the specialized agencies. The Nordic countries therefore believed that the implications of transferring OPS should be studied carefully in the larger context of the reform of the economic and social activities of the United Nations system, including the roles and mandates of the United Nations Secretariat and the funds and programmes in question.

28. Since the activities of OPS were funded by voluntary contributions, 50 per cent of which came from outside the United Nations system, the Nordic countries believed it was necessary to identify clearly the financial implications of the transfer. The consequences of the transfer for UNDP itself should be taken into account as well. That was an issue that would also have to be considered by the UNDP Governing Council.

29. The Secretary-General had indicated in his report that several conditions must be met in order to maintain the competitiveness and relative strengths of OPS. One of those conditions concerned the provision to OPS by UNDP of central services, which should be provided by the United Nations instead.

30. Furthermore, the Nordic countries did not believe that the division of responsibilities between the Department of Development Support and Management Services and the operational funds and programmes was sufficiently clear. They wondered whether the division had been made simply according to the fields in which the Department and the funds and programmes operated or whether the intention was perhaps that the Department should develop capacities for post-conflict peace-building, while the funds and programmes would concentrate on long-term development cooperation.

31. Apart from the question of the transfer of OPS, the Nordic countries believed that the decision to set up three new departments in the place of the Department of Economic and Social Development was a reasonable one. The new structure should make it possible to resist the tendency of various elements of the Organization to develop work programmes in isolation from each other, often

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(Mr. Breitenstein, Finland)

leading to duplication as well as the tendency for the Organization to create new secretariat entities whenever new programmes were established.

32. With respect to the transfer of several units to and from Headquarters, more information on the rationale behind the proposals put forward in the revised estimates was needed. What needed to be done now was to make sure that the transition proceeded as smoothly as possible; an evaluation should be carried out in one or two years.

33. While the Nordic countries were encouraged that the Secretary-General had been able to stay within existing resources - which was in keeping with the main purpose of the restructuring process - they believed, as the Advisory Committee did, that the financial impact of the operation should be fully disclosed.

34. As the Secretary-General indicated in paragraph 39 of the revised estimates, reporting on development issues should be reformed. There was a need for consolidated reports, instead of the myriads of publications from which it was difficult and time-consuming to discern the essence.

35. In regard to decentralization - which would be a main issue during the next stage of the reform process - the Nordic countries looked forward to the proposals that the Secretary-General would make in the framework of the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995. Experience had shown that it was important to hold informal consultations on the matter before taking any decisions.

36. In the political sector, the Nordic countries attached great importance at the current stage to the administration and financing of peace-keeping operations. The growth in the personnel required for those operations - from 15,000 to more than 50,000 people - meant that it was impossible to conduct such operations in the same manner as before. Adjustments needed to be made in structures, manpower and working methods as soon as possible in order to keep pace with the increasing workload. It was no longer possible to prepare peace-keeping budgets over several months. Budgeting methods should be reviewed critically and changed as necessary. The Secretary-General and Member States should also do their utmost, either through redeployment or secondment of personnel, to strengthen the capacity for dealing with various aspects of peace-keeping operations. The Secretary-General should address such issues as a matter of urgency.

37. The main part of the restructuring of the Secretariat presented in the revised estimates would only bear fruit if internal audit, inspection and evaluation mechanisms were strengthened. The reduction in the number of high-level posts had clarified the command structure. However, the abolition and classification of posts should be based on functional analysis of the importance and responsibilities of any given job. A case in point concerned the most senior officials of the Department of Administration and Management. The Nordic countries agreed with the Advisory Committee that decisions concerning high-level posts in the Department should be deferred to the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. It might also be useful to consider establishing objective classification criteria for high-level posts. Lastly, the creation of a D-3 grade could have implications for the current system.

(Mr. Breitenstein, Finland)

38. With regard to the post of Director of the International Trade Centre (ITC), the Nordic countries, being among the main donors to the Centre, wished to draw attention to the fact that, with no decision having been taken for over a year, the situation thus created had already had serious consequences for the work of ITC, and hence for the developing countries. The Nordic countries considered it absolutely crucial that the General Assembly and GATT should take an urgent decision on that issue.

39. While the Organization's structures were being streamlined to a great extent, the reform process should also permit improvements in the working methods of each individual staff member, and in performance evaluation and career development. Moreover, staff remuneration should correspond more closely to the amount of work done and the level of responsibility assumed. The recruitment freeze should be lifted, not in order to recruit indiscriminately, but in order to make rapid offers of posts to the candidates selected on the basis of the recruitment examinations.

40. The reform process should be extended to field operations and structures, and ultimately to the specialized agencies. The Nordic countries looked forward to the Secretary-General's further proposals on those issues.

41. Lastly, needless to say, a secure financial basis was crucial for the survival of the United Nations as a credible international organization, and any reform which it undertook would only succeed if all Member States paid their assessed contributions in full and on time.

42. Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria) said that his Government had pledged its full cooperation with the Secretary-General concerning the restructuring of the United Nations Secretariat with a view to enhancing its efficiency, and that it would continue to do so.

43. As the current phase of the restructuring involved the creation of three new departments in New York and the transfer of 771 posts between four different duty stations, it was essential to assess accurately all the implications of the changes proposed. However, the Austrian delegation, in common with many other delegations and the Advisory Committee, regretted that the document under consideration did not provide sufficient explanation of the programmatic impact of the restructuring, as requested in General Assembly resolutions 46/232 and 47/212. In particular, the transfers of activities should be justified more convincingly.

44. The Austrian delegation had serious doubts with regard to the incorporation of social activities into two of the three new economic departments. Being thus grouped with economic and environmental matters, they were likely to be deprived of any independent articulation, which could raise questions with regard to the promotion of social issues, to which the reform of the United Nations in 1987 was to draw attention by entrusting them to a centre with a separate identity from that of the economic sector, namely the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs in Vienna. The abolition of the Centre and the transfer to New York of a large number of its posts might have negative consequences for the preparations for significant events, such as the International Year of the Family in 1994, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the World Summit for Social Development in 1995. For its part, the Austrian delegation remained

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(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

convinced that a focal point for coordinating United Nations activities in the social area should be located in Vienna.

45. The formal commitment of the Secretary-General to maintain the status of Vienna as a main headquarters centre was of overriding importance to the Austrian delegation. Moreover, the 16 posts connected with the transfer to Vienna of the Outer Space Affairs Division were no compensation for the 59 posts to be withdrawn from Vienna. Two United Nations conferences on outer space had already been held in Vienna, and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had also held three sessions there. Many delegations had underlined the role played by Austria in chairing that Committee since its origin. The Austrian delegation stated that it regarded that redeployment as the first stage of the transfer to Vienna of activities equivalent to all those to be transferred to New York. Its approval of restructuring proposals was subject to that being carried out.

46. In addition, the Outer Space Affairs Division was so small that the Secretary-General should take steps to ensure adequate use of the office space in Vienna offered at no cost to the United Nations. Austria thus looked forward to additional proposals from the Secretary-General regarding activities that could benefit from a relocation to Vienna, which he intended to submit in the next programme budget. He should present a comprehensive view of all transfers of activities from and to Vienna. That said, Austria supported the Secretary-General's intention to decentralize activities.

47. The Advisory Committee pointed out that the financial data of the revised budget estimates were not comparable with the data in the programme budget approved by the General Assembly. As a result, Member States were unable to evaluate the financial implications of the current phase of restructuring. It appeared, however, to involve substantial costs, since the savings stemmed from the reduction of high-level posts during that first phase. His delegation therefore looked forward to receiving detailed information on the costs of the restructuring, including those for additional office space arising from transfers of posts, as requested by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 25 of its report (A/47/7/Add.15).

48. In that connection, it should be said that Vienna was the only headquarters duty station where the United Nations was being offered office space at a symbolic rate of 10 cents a year. By fully utilizing the Vienna Office, the United Nations would save rental costs. During a financial crisis, the cost element of transferring activities and staff had to be borne in mind.

49. Mr. BABA (Uganda) fully supported the statements made by the Chairman of the Group of 77 during the 59th meeting on the issues before the Committee. The question remained as to whether the existing structures could carry out the mandates legislated by Member States, and if so, whether reform was necessary; as to why there had been a second phase of restructuring so soon after the first; as to whether any other phases were in the offing; and as to whether, in the restructuring, clear lines should be drawn to demarcate prerogatives or whether harmony should be sought.

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(Mr. Baba, Uganda)

50. Resolutions 41/213 and 46/232 gave clear signals to the Secretary-General that he should carry out whatever restructuring there was in close consultation with Member States. In that respect, Uganda wished to associate itself with the views expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 6 of its report (A/47/7/Add.15). His delegation also wished to see a clear vision of where the reforms were leading the Organization. The report of the Secretary-General was lacking in that regard. Uganda therefore looked forward to the moment when the overall restructuring plan would be reviewed and to an early indication of the time-frame for the entire implementation of the reforms before any further restructuring phases were embarked upon.

51. There was an apparent lack of clarity in the Secretary-General's intentions especially as concerned the items treated in paragraphs 40 (a) and 100 (iv) and (v) of his report, in which the least developed countries were grouped together with those with economies in transition. That could be construed as a way of putting the first on an equal footing with the second, clearly inappropriate even at face value. Member States should be consulted over important political choices of that nature, and, if necessary, they would state their opinion after deliberation. To return to the issues specifically treated in the paragraphs cited, the texts defining the missions were clear, and the Secretary-General would undoubtedly adhere scrupulously to them.

52. Given the lack of comprehensive information on the allocation of subprogrammes and resources shared among departments, it was difficult to make any substantive comments on the revised estimates. The treatment of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s was outstanding. When the General Assembly had adopted the New Agenda, it had provided for strengthening of the Department of Development Support and Management Services responsible for its implementation. That would be desirable since it involved a global programme requiring system-wide coordination. The Agenda acquired that specific status because of the situation prevailing in a continent which had placed high hopes on it.

53. With regard to United Nations unified presence and approach at the country level, Uganda fully supported the opinion expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 23 of its report. In 1993, during the United Nations triennial policy review of development operations, the idea of creating a United Nations representative post was flatly rejected. It would be interesting to know the source of the support which increasingly that project was said to enjoy.

54. The Secretary-General forecast savings of $263,400 over the amounts approved in December 1992. The revised forecasts did not, however, indicate all the costs of the restructuring exercise. There were also potential costs to which the Advisory Committee had alluded in paragraphs 25 to 27 of its report.

55. With the transfer of Secretariat officials to UNCTAD, concern arose over knowing how the legislative bodies responsible for science and technology and transnational corporations would be able to work in New York, since their support services would be located in Geneva, and, even more to the point, over knowing what the officials relocated to Geneva could do that they could not do in New York. His delegation supported everything the Secretary-General did to rationalize the operations of the United Nations and its bodies but hoped that

(Mr. Baba, Uganda)

the Secretary-General would proceed in an integrated and coherent manner. The way in which departments responsible for science and technology were currently being handled left much to be desired.

56. With regard to the Secretary-General's proposal to integrate the Office for Support Services for UNDP projects into the new Department of Development Support and Management Services, his delegation would appreciate clarification as to the degree of autonomy envisaged since there would, naturally, need to be clear delineation between the new Department and UNDP as to the Office's responsibility. If UNDP was responsible for supplying administrative support and its Governing Council retained oversight rights, it would be legitimate to wonder what role would be left for the Department or, more to the point, how the Office's autonomy would be manifested.

57. The Secretary-General requested the retention of some posts and only a temporary redeployment of others. He hoped that Member States would be consulted before these changes were finalized. The concerns of his delegation coincided with those expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 41 of its report on the Department of Administration and Management. In all cases, the level of responsibility should correspond to the level of authority. His delegation was prepared to review any other measure which would enhance these levels.

58. It appeared that the restructuring exercise was dominated by the trend towards making elimination of high-level posts a solution to the problem of staff reduction. His delegation did not support the reason given for downgrading the post of Head of the International Trade Centre, an initiative which in the current international business climate hardly seemed rational. Equally disturbing was the decision to abolish the post of Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the proposal to merge the activities of the Centre with those of the United Nations Environment Programme. Lest they compromise the programmes on human settlements, in which the declarations following the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development had renewed interest, his delegation did not see fit to support the proposed changes.

59. It was noted that so far almost all suppression of posts and redeployment of resources had touched mainly on areas of vital interest to developing countries: International Trade Centre, Centre for Human Settlements, Centre on Transnational Corporations, Centre for Science and Technology. It was important, for that reason, to avoid creating the impression that reform had been designed to marginalize the issues of interest to the developing countries. The new face of the United Nations has not yet been seen by the general public. Downgrading the posts or redirecting resources related to these areas was not a way to enhance that image.

60. Mr. KARBUCZKY (Hungary) said that the Secretary-General had a major role to play in the restructuring of the Organization, a task which continued to enjoy his delegation's support. Member States, furthermore, had clearly indicated that they wished to exercise their right to define the Organization's future. Bearing that in mind, his delegation had been puzzled when presented with a radical reorganization of the Secretariat's structure in the middle of a regular budget cycle. After the Secretary-General's note (A/47/753), it had seemed

(Mr. Karbuczky, Hungary)

logical to move to a substantive discussion in the intergovernmental forums but apparently the opportunity had been lost. Contributions which high-level groups of experts could make, assuming that they were welcome in this type of operation, must not be substituted for intergovernmental decisions. It would have been easier, and more timely also, to implement the second phase of the reform at the same time as the new regular budget in 1994. It was still possible to hope that Member States would be able, at least after the fact, to consider what would happen during the second phase.

61. Since the proposals made were transsectoral, it was difficult to bring out clearly and fully the "synergies" and "cross-fertilization" and to measure the "critical mass" of resources often referred to when implementing certain missions. It could be hoped, however, that, with time, some of the structural changes would permit a closer approximation to the ideal of a more efficient organization. From that perspective, his delegation was prepared to subscribe to general policy considerations leading to the creation of three new departments although, like the Advisory Committee, it felt that the transfer of posts and functions between duty stations should be more fully justified.

62. The Secretary-General's initiative to concentrate United Nations technical assistance to meet the requirements of, among others, countries in transition was most welcome. Still, it was not certain that the initiative must be part of an integrated approach to development whose superiority had not been proved; as the proverb stated: "He who grabs for too much, catches fish". Perhaps the Organization's limited resources did not allow it to achieve such ambitious goals.

63. Having quickly reviewed the different issues raised by the proposed restructuring, he noted that paragraphs 19 to 20 of the Advisory Committee's report echoed his own concerns over the transfer of officials to Vienna. It was legitimate to fear that the activities of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, well focused up to that point, would be diluted in the proposed new structure. The competent intergovernmental bodies should discuss this in detail. Another point of concern was that the human rights issues relating to the advancement of women would be completely submerged in the abyss of economic development policy. Moreover, his delegation wished to have clarification on the modalities and legislative texts which would allow the Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis to "link its activities with early warning capabilities being developed in the political and humanitarian sectors of the Organization", as stated in paragraph 37 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/47/88). In paragraph 40 (b) of the same document, the issue had been raised as to which financial management functions the Controller could delegate to the Department of Development Support and Management Services. But exactly which functions were meant? Lastly, his delegation wondered whether the eight posts referred to in paragraph 129 were still needed and whether some of them could be offered for the redeployment that seemed justified by the enormous workload of the liaison office of the Centre for Human Rights in New York.

64. With regard to the Secretary-General's plan to introduce a D-3 level for career professionals, equivalent to the ASG level (para. 14), it was not easy to understand the distinction between political and career appointments,

(Mr. Karbuczky, Hungary)

particularly in a world Organization whose political character was formed by the collective will of its 180 Member States. The Secretary-General had the right to appoint the highest-level staff, but that should not preclude career professionals from occupying Under-Secretary-General or Assistant Secretary-General posts. Further justification and clarification of the creation of the D-3 level was needed, and above all an explanation of how the proliferation of such posts could be prevented. The Advisory Committee made very appropriate observations on that question in paragraphs 44 to 48 of its report.

65. The posts of the officers in charge of finances and of the personnel policies of the Organization should be protected from seasonal changes in the upper echelons since they were highly technical and should be filled on the basis of the expertise of the candidates. The current situation, where crucial executive posts in the Department of Administration and Management were classified at the D-2 level, was unsatisfactory in view of the level of responsibility and authority those posts entailed. His delegation had supported the reduction in the number of high-level posts recommended by the "Group of 18" (Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations) and welcomed the reductions proposed by the Secretary-General during the first part of the forty-seventh session. It feared, however, that the creation of new high-level posts elsewhere, offset by reductions exclusively in the Department of Administration and Management, would create functional problems. When the Committee expressed its will, in its resolutions and decisions, it addressed the Secretary-General, but in practical terms it was addressing Professionals at the D-2 level vis-à-vis other departments and offices. The implementation of the Committee's mandates would therefore be jeopardized if there was a breach in the chain of command, as was clearly the case in the Department of Administration and Management. The Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 42 of its report (A/47/7/Add.15) would effectively restore the normal chain of command.

66. Mr. JU Kuilin (China) said that the structural adjustment and redistribution of functions in the United Nations reform process was unprecedented in the history of the United Nations. Its results would directly affect the implementation of programmes and the very future of the Organization. In his view, it was highly necessary to reform the structure of the Organization, improve its management and increase the efficiency of its administrative and financial functioning. The Chairman of the Group of 77, in the excellent statement he had made on the subject on behalf of that Group, had raised a number of questions which were of deep concern to his delegation as well.

67. In his delegation's view, United Nations reform required full consultations with all the Member States, the Secretariat and the relevant intergovernmental organizations. While the Secretary-General, as the chief administrator of the Organization, was responsible for the reform of the Secretariat, it should be carried out on the basis of the processes that were under way in various intergovernmental organizations. The Second and Third Committees were currently discussing the reform of the economic and social fields. Until those deliberations were completed, it would be inappropriate, and probably counterproductive, to undertake the reform of programmes in the corresponding departments of the Secretariat.

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(Mr. Ju Kuilin, China)

68. While the economic gap between North and South and between rich and poor was widening, the only way of genuinely achieving the objectives of reform was to accord greater importance to the issues of economic development, and especially to the revitalization and growth of the developing countries. His delegation wished to emphasize that the five priority programmes of the medium-term plan already approved by the General Assembly (peace and security, economic development of developing countries, African economic recovery and development, environment and drug control) should be fully reflected throughout the reform process. With regard to the specific measures to be taken to better achieve those objectives, the opinions of the Member States, and especially of the developing countries, should first be sought. As had been pointed out by the Chairman of the Group of 77 at the previous meeting, the full and effective implementation of the programmes agreed on by the General Assembly must be the criterion for assessing the Secretary-General's proposals for reform.

69. With regard to structural reforms, his delegation wished to point out that the specialized technical departments and agencies, such as those concerned with transnational corporations or science and technology for development, had played an active and useful role for many years in promoting development and the technical progress of developing countries, and were widely acclaimed by those countries. The proposal to transfer six posts to Geneva from the United Nations Centre for Science and Technology for Development and to leave the other four posts behind at Headquarters in New York might adversely affect the implementation of the programmes adopted by the General Assembly to strengthen the scientific capabilities of developing countries. Another example was the World Food Council. Its location in Rome was very convenient for consultations and management in its field of work, and its role was likewise appreciated by the developing countries. If those agencies were to be reorganized, moved or merged, their role might be adversely affected, and that possibility was of concern to his delegation.

70. On the issues of decentralization and United Nations regional coordinators, his delegation shared the views expressed by the Chairman of the Group of 77. If programme activities were divided among the regions and coordination was not satisfactory, each might go its own way, and that would adversely affect the implementation of programme activities at the global level. As noted by the Group of 77, the proposals for the decentralization of activities concerning natural resources, energy and water must take into account the need to maintain an updated world information service at Headquarters. As to the designation of regional United Nations coordinators mentioned by the Secretary-General in his report, that reform was very political in nature, and there must be further consultation of all the Member States.

71. On the issue of general budgetary questions, his delegation believed that the relocation of some agencies and the redeployment of staff members would definitely lead to an increase in expenditure. Detailed analyses and calculations were therefore required. The Secretary-General also referred to a number of reforms of budgetary procedures. Some decisions of principle had already been taken in the United Nations. According to the normal procedure, substantive committees like the Second and Third Committees should first consider the issues concerned and make specific recommendations; the Fifth

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(Mr. Ju Kuilin, China)

Committee would then review the financial aspects. It was important to maintain the normal procedure in budgetary matters; his delegation wished to express its concern over that issue.

72. On the question of reducing the number of high-level posts and strengthening the administration, his delegation believed that that process should be conducted in a rational fashion, according to actual requirements. As pointed out by the Japanese delegation at the 59th meeting, some of the high-level posts, particularly posts in the financial, budgetary and personnel departments, should be retained. Those two departments were of the greatest importance in the functioning of the United Nations, and many Member States wished to strengthen them further. The posts of Controller and head of the Office of Human Resources Management should therefore be maintained at the Assistant Secretary-General level so as to facilitate financial resources management and personnel administration.

73. Lastly, his delegation emphasized that there should be further consultations among Member States on specific reform measures and elements. For its part, it would participate in the deliberations, in the hope that the reform efforts of the United Nations would achieve fruitful results.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
61st meeting
held on
Tuesday, 30 March 1993
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 61st MEETING

Chairman: Ms. ROTHEISER (Vice-Chairman) (Austria)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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AGENDA ITEM 104: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (*continued*)

Revised estimates resulting from the restructuring of the Secretariat (*continued*)

General debate (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 103: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (*continued*)

AGENDA ITEM 104: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (*continued*)

Revised estimates resulting from the restructuring of the Secretariat (*continued*) (A/C.5/47/88 and A/47/7/Add.15; A/C.5/47/92)

General debate (*continued*)

1. Mr. MONGBE (Benin) thanked the Secretary-General for the revised estimates contained in document A/C.5/47/88, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/212. His delegation fully supported the position of the Group of 77 in that regard. The Secretary-General, as the Chief Administrative Officer of the United Nations, should receive all the support necessary for carrying out the reforms needed to respond to the rapid changes in international relations. As the Controller and other speakers had pointed out, a number of General Assembly resolutions could serve as a basis for the adoption of decisions on the subject that would reflect the aspirations of various Member States and political and geographical groups. Every decision on the revitalization or rationalization of intergovernmental economic and social structures should be based on General Assembly resolutions 41/232, 46/235 and 47/212.

2. Benin supported all measures for strengthening the economic and social structures of the Secretariat, particularly the mechanisms for implementing the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s. As those mechanisms had to confront extremely difficult problems, their position on the organizational chart should be upgraded in line with their importance. In any case, Africa and the least developed countries hoped that no reform of the United Nations system would be carried out to its detriment. For that reason, his delegation hoped for assurances that the functions of the structures dealing with coordinating programmes concerning those countries would be better defined and upgraded. Generally speaking, there was a need to clarify the whole context and conception of the restructuring process of the Secretariat and to have a general picture of the restructuring exercise together with a timetable for its implementation.

3. The Secretary-General's document contained useful and important proposals such as the one on the establishment of three new economic, social and related departments at United Nations Headquarters. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that it would be advisable to ensure effective and efficient economic and social coordination between the new departments on the one hand and other United Nations offices such as those at Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi on the other hand. As for decentralization, he welcomed the Secretary-General's intention to strengthen the role and contribution of the regional commissions and hoped that those commissions would help the groups of States interested in implementing economic integration policies.

4. As for the Secretary-General's proposal concerning the four Assistant Secretary-General posts in the Department of Administration and Management, the

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advice of the Advisory Committee to postpone every decision on the subject in order to take into account the comments that the General Assembly might wish to make thereon was a wise one.

5. In view of the eloquent presentation of the case by the Chairman of the Group of 77, it seemed pointless to stress that the proposal to appoint United Nations representatives with political functions had met with considerable reticence and even disapproval from many delegations. In that connection, it would be better to maintain the current mandate of the Resident Coordinator.

6. Mr. ELZIMAITY (Egypt) said that broadly speaking the report of the Advisory Committee (A/47/7/Add.15) reflected his delegation's position on the report of the Secretary-General as well as its view of what the second phase of the restructuring of the Secretariat should be and the methods that should be used to bring it into practice. He also agreed fully with the declarations made on that subject by the Chairman of the Group of 77 which reflected the concern and position of the developing countries in general. Moreover, the restructuring process must be implemented in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 41/213, 45/264, 46/235 and 47/212.

7. His delegation did not quite understand how the proposed organizational and structural changes related to the proposed reallocation of resources nor how implementation of approved programmes could be improved. Nevertheless, the creation of three new departments provided a good opportunity for improving the economic role of the United Nations with a view to fulfilling one of its main purposes and objectives, namely "the promotion of economic and social advancement of all peoples". Moreover, adaptation to new circumstances and the adjustments of its organizational structures and processes should be permanent features of a sound organization. Restructuring could also help to overcome the tendency to develop programmes in isolation from each other and to create new Secretariat entities whenever new agendas were adopted.

8. His delegation supported the framework proposed by the Secretary-General, but would rely on the preparation and presentation of the budget for the biennium 1994-1995 in order to discuss a number of important issues relating to restructuring. However, he stressed that priority must be given to technical cooperation and added that the arrangements for incorporating the Office for Project Services were vital for maintaining and increasing its autonomy and efficiency. His delegation also supported an increased role for the regional commissions.

9. Another area where changes would be needed in preparation of the budget for the period 1994-1995 was the procedure to be followed by the Secretariat for drawing up a report containing the United Nations views on the state of the world. The report should be descriptive and policy-setting and should address the main problems facing the international community, such as racism, poverty, intolerance and economic disarray. The document before the Committee gave no clear indication of the Secretary-General's intentions thereon.

10. The transfer to Geneva of activities related to science and technology could be beneficial for the developing countries. With that in view, a unit of adequate size, headed by an official at the appropriate level, would be needed to enable the United Nations to play a prominent role in that area. Decentralization of functions and activities to the regional commissions should

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(Mr. Elzimaity, Egypt)

be accompanied by a review of the functioning of the commissions aimed at enhancing their efficiency.

11. His delegation would have welcomed clearer indications of the relationship between the proposed restructuring and the priorities adopted by the General Assembly, particularly the question of the economic and social development of Africa, which should be given top priority in United Nations programmes. Furthermore, no provision had been made during the present phase of restructuring for the intergovernmental mechanism for economic and social development. Nevertheless, certain changes might be needed, for example with regard to supplementing the programmes of the Economic and Social Council and the Trade and Development Board, as well as in connection with the functions of various commissions and committees, including the Commission for Social Development. The measures taken to improve the efficiency of the Secretariat appeared to be in the right direction, but failed to address many issues, such as the redistribution of posts, the need for greater staff mobility, the mobilization of the Secretariat towards clear and universal goals and the continuation of dialogue and consultations with Member States.

12. Special emphasis should be placed on a number of points. First, the General Assembly had decided that priority in the execution of programmes should be given to the least developed countries and the isolated reference in document A/C.5/47/88 to that priority as the responsibility of the Department of Development Support and Management Services should not be misleading. Second, a new description was needed of the functions of the Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, in strict compliance with the limits imposed by the Charter and the General Assembly, since many delegations felt that the current description might constitute a violation of the sovereignty of Member States. Third, his delegation did not support the initiative to appoint "United Nations representatives" and, in any case, felt that consideration of the matter should be deferred since there was still no consensus thereon, in spite of the remarks in paragraph 63 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/47/88).

13. With regard to the Department of Administration and Management, his delegation found it difficult to support the decision to downgrade the four existing Assistant Secretary-General posts, particularly those of the chief of the Office of Human Resources Management and the Controller, and did not believe that the proposal to create a D-3 post should be linked to downgrading the four Assistant Secretary-General posts. His delegation agreed with the opinion expressed by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 45 to 47 of its report concerning the failure to provide a clear explanation for the creation of a D-3 post, the incumbent of which might be seen as a "second-class Assistant Secretary-General", thereby diminishing authority in vital areas of administration and control. The matter required careful consideration, notably by the International Civil Service Commission.

14. His delegation fully shared the Advisory Committee's opinion that it was extremely urgent for the restructuring process to deal with the question of the Field Operations Division and for everything possible to be done to strengthen that important division. It also agreed on the need to coordinate activities concerning the management and administration of peace-keeping so as to improve their planning and budgeting. His delegation also shared the opinion expressed in paragraph 7 of the report of the Advisory Committee, cautioning against

over-reliance on external consultants when it would be more appropriate to make use of the vast and far-reaching expertise of United Nations staff. Finally, his delegation fully supported the Secretary-General's efforts to enhance the function of the Secretariat and improve its performance, in order to respond to the rapid changes taking place in the world.

15. Mr. CHUINKAM (Cameroon), after acknowledging the Secretary-General's efforts to improve the efficiency of the administrative and financial performance of the United Nations, said that General Assembly resolution 47/212 stressed that the restructuring of the Secretariat should be in conformity with the objectives and guidelines/principles set out in resolution 46/232 and in close consultation with Member States and relevant intergovernmental bodies. However, the fact that those bodies had not been duly consulted had reduced the Committee's ability to take an informed decision on such an important issue.

16. Turning to the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/47/88), he noted that paragraph 40 (a) appeared to suggest that equal treatment would be given to the least developed countries and to the countries with economies in transition, as if they were at the same level of development, while relegating the problems of other developing countries to the background. In addition, it was clear from paragraph 83 of the report that the resources had not been allocated by subprogrammes in a detailed manner and that the resources would be flexibly managed to accommodate the priority requirements of the three new departments for the rest of the year. Because it was not yet clear what tasks each department or unit would perform, it was difficult to determine whether the resources allocated were adequate. Assurances were needed to show that implementation of mandated programmes would not be adversely affected and, in particular, there was a need to strengthen the unit responsible for implementing the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s.

17. His delegation considered that, in defining the functions of the new Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, efforts should be made to avoid any perception by Member States that their sovereignty might be violated.

18. The Secretary-General had indicated that there was a growing consensus on the need for a unified United Nations presence and approach at country level, and had seen the selection of United Nations representatives, who would also act as resident coordinators for the United Nations system, as a key to more effective coordination. He (Mr. Chuinkam) pointed out that no consensus had yet been reached on that matter and that his delegation would be reluctant to agree to any political functions being assigned to the United Nations representative in its country.

19. His delegation supported the proposal to decentralize certain activities and posts from Headquarters to the regional commissions, but believed that a skeleton technical staff should be maintained at Headquarters. It also supported the observations of the Chairman of the Group of 77 relating to the status of the units in UNCTAD that would be concerned with transnational corporations and science and technology, and concerning the need for the post of head of the International Trade Centre to be filled as soon as possible at the Assistant Secretary-General level.

(Mr. Chuinkam, Cameroon)

20. Lastly, he endorsed the observations and recommendations in paragraphs 41 to 48 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/47/7/Add.15) and cautioned against the negative effect which a protracted restructuring exercise would have on staff morale.

21. Mr. MORCZYNSKI (Poland) said that his delegation shared the view that there was a need to enhance the effectiveness of the economic and social sectors of the Secretariat and supported the Secretary-General's work in achieving that objective; it was pleased to see that, in the mandates and activities of the new departments, the need was stressed to give particular attention to developing countries and countries with economies in transition. It hoped that the restructuring process would not adversely affect the preparations for a world summit for social development, where decisions might be taken that would require the creation of new structures. A cautious approach should therefore be taken to the restructuring of activities in the social sector.

22. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's proposal for the transfer to UNCTAD of posts that were concerned with transnational corporations and science and technology for development. That move was in the direction outlined at the eighth session of UNCTAD, held at Cartagena, and might require changes in the intergovernmental structure of the United Nations as well.

23. His delegation was deeply concerned that it had not been possible for the revised estimates to reflect the comments and recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination; it fully supported the Advisory Committee's observation on that matter. Lastly, he noted that at first sight the cost savings resulting from the restructuring exercise were disappointing; his delegation hoped that detailed financial information would be provided for each programme budget section to serve as a basis for a well-founded opinion on that issue.

24. Mr. KALPAGE (Sri Lanka) said that although the Secretary-General, as the "chief administrative officer of the Organization", was responsible for management of the Secretariat, in that capacity he had to follow the guidelines contained in General Assembly resolutions, particularly those on restructuring, including resolutions 46/232 and 47/212. The Secretary-General had noted, in paragraph 7 of his report (A/C.5/47/88), that "restructuring is (...) aimed at a more responsive, cost-effective, streamlined Secretariat, comprising organizational units with more focused and precise terms of reference and clear lines of responsibility and accountability". His delegation agreed with those aims, but also endorsed the observations of the Chairman of the Group of 77 that the mandate and priorities agreed to by the General Assembly must be maintained unaltered and that there was a need for a restructured Secretariat to provide substantive support for intergovernmental machinery and to strengthen technical cooperation.

25. The Department of Economic and Social Development, which had been established a year before to provide coherence and avoid duplication, was being divided into three different departments: the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, the Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis and the Department of Development Support and Management Services. In order to facilitate assessing the restructuring exercise, more details of the components, structure and operation of those

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departments were needed. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that more justification was needed concerning the transfer of functions and posts between duty stations with regard to activities pertaining to social development and the advancement of women, the World Food Council, transnational corporations, science and technology for development and the peaceful uses of outer space. It also shared the view that the Secretary-General's proposals in the economic and social sectors gave rise to questions concerning the required coordination and hoped that more detailed information would be provided on the discharge of responsibilities formerly entrusted to the Director-General.

26. Although the Secretary-General's efforts to streamline the senior management structure of the Secretariat were to be welcomed, there was a need for objective classification criteria for high-level posts. The proposal to create a D-3 level and to downgrade four Assistant Secretary-General posts must be reconsidered. His delegation was concerned about the proposal to abolish the post of the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) which could be a setback for implementing the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000, because, in order to achieve the objectives of the strategy, high-level support was required from the Secretariat. The Centre had the responsibility, inter alia, to provide support to Member States in the execution of technical cooperation projects for over $65 million per biennium, and the Executive Director's post had to be maintained at the Assistant Secretary-General level.

27. Restructuring the Secretariat was only one aspect of restructuring the United Nations system, a process which was being carried out in a spirit of cooperation. Restructuring and revitalizing the economic and social sectors of the United Nations was in progress in the Second and Third Committees, while a working group of the General Assembly was dealing with various aspects of "An Agenda for Peace", and the President of the General Assembly had set in motion the process of revitalizing the General Assembly. All those efforts should be seen not as compartmentalized operations but as a single integrated whole. The streamlining of Secretariat activities in the economic and social sectors should reinforce the restructuring and revitalizing process carried out by the General Assembly in accordance with resolution 45/264.

28. Mr. HICKS (United States of America) said that the United Nations must play a central role in addressing global problems and that, to that end, long overdue reforms must be implemented, and at the same time Member States must make a commitment to meet their financial obligations to the United Nations. Over the past three years, the United States had significantly improved its payment record, and in 1992, over 38 per cent of all the assessed funds collected by the United Nations had represented contributions by the United States. The Clinton Administration was firmly committed to meeting United States obligations to the United Nations.

29. Representatives of Member States must ensure maximum return on their contributions and must demonstrate that United Nations programmes and operations were relevant and cost-effective. At a time of austerity, no less could be expected from the United Nations.

30. The revised budget estimates for the biennium 1992-1993 represented a significant departure from traditional approaches, which often failed to produce results. A major step had been taken towards integrating economic, social and

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(Mr. Hicks, United States)

environmental issues to ensure greater coherence in policy formulation and programme implementation. The reorganization plan also emphasized the importance of achieving effective coordination of the agencies and programmes of the United Nations system and the decentralization of decision-making and resources. While the process was not yet complete, it was moving in the right direction.

31. One of the key objectives of restructuring had been to achieve greater coherence in policy-making and integration of the major aspects of the development process. The consolidation of previously separate organizational entities should lead to improved programme delivery. However, responsibility for economic and social questions had been shared among three departments, each headed by an Under-Secretary-General, whereas it would have been preferable to hold onto those questions under the supervision of a single under-secretary-general. His concern was not related simply to the number of high-level posts being established, but rather to the possibility that the proposed structure might not ensure the necessary coordination and cooperation. With regard to technical assistance, the Secretary-General intended to assume responsibility for the operation of the Office for Project Services and to merge its functions with those of the former Department of Technical Cooperation for Development. Given the success which the Office had achieved under the management of UNDP, his delegation questioned the proposal and recommended that the advice of the UNDP Governing Council should be sought before a final decision was taken on the future of the Office.

32. The proposals to restructure the Secretariat were not accompanied by changes in the venues of related intergovernmental bodies and, given that resolution 40/243 required that intergovernmental bodies should meet at the headquarters of their respective substantive secretariat units, a number of bodies might experience increased travel expenses and problems in providing services, if the General Assembly accepted the proposed plan. The General Assembly should therefore take the measures necessary to change the venues of the bodies concerned. He asked the Secretariat to provide the Committee with a list of the intergovernmental bodies involved, indicating the changes in venues that had to be approved by the General Assembly and the resulting financial implications.

33. The proposals before the Committee did not address the nature and substance of specific United Nations programmes, and the report of the Secretary-General pointed out that the programmes contained in the medium-term plan and in the budget for the biennium 1992-1993 would be carried out as approved. There was no point in rearranging the structure of the United Nations unless its programmes and activities were also changed. He had noted on several occasions that much of the output of the United Nations, particularly in the economic, social and environmental sectors, did not address the needs of Member States and that an excessive share of resources would remain allocated to servicing meetings, producing reports for intergovernmental bodies, and issuing technical or statistical publications. Many of those products were necessary and useful, but a large number of them were not. It was to be hoped that the budget for 1994-1995 would contain programme proposals which represented a dramatic departure from previous practice.

34. Restructuring should also lead to a rationalization of the distribution of staff within the Secretariat. New structures and working methods that

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(Mr. Hicks, United States)

eliminated duplication, redundancies and ineffective activities would create the staff resources required to meet new priorities. The Secretary-General's plans did not go far enough in that direction. In addition, the revised estimates did not seem to take account of the rapidly increasing responsibilities of the United Nations in peace-keeping, peacemaking, human rights and humanitarian assistance. Much greater staff redeployment would be needed for that purpose and he hoped that it would be proposed in the next budget. Once the new structures were in place, a very thorough assessment of the staff levels of each department must be conducted to achieve the necessary reallocation of resources.

35. He expressed concern at the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a new D-3 staff category. Before doing so, the Secretary-General should explain what problems were associated with Assistant Secretary-General posts and how they would be resolved by the establishment of D-3 posts. Unless Member States clearly understood the need for such posts, the United Nations ran the risk of creating a new bureaucratic layer which might complicate existing lines of authority. Furthermore, his delegation felt that the vast expansion of the Organization's programmes and resources justified retention of the Assistant Secretary-General grade for the post of United Nations Controller. The Committee could resolve the matter without establishing a new category. The two other posts proposed for the D-3 category did not merit such a grade level and the funding for them should therefore be deleted.

36. He expressed his Government's deep concern at the fact that a large number of officials whose posts were financed from the Organization's resources were not subject to the provisions of the Staff Regulations and Rules. That situation constituted a serious lapse in policies and procedures aimed at ensuring the highest standards of integrity and competence and should be rectified as soon as possible. His delegation therefore proposed that, at its forty-seventh session, the General Assembly should adopt the necessary regulations to remedy the situation, which should cover all individuals receiving compensation from the United Nations.

37. His delegation appreciated the Secretary-General's efforts to formulate an integrated approach to development questions and, while it had difficulties with certain aspects of the plan, it was prepared to accept the proposals on the understanding that further refinements would be offered if necessary. It was also prepared to accept the revised estimates on the understanding that the reform and restructuring process would continue. Much remained to be done to rationalize the work and staffing levels of each department and office in the Secretariat. All programmes, particularly those which reflected initiatives of the Secretariat, required thorough review to ensure that resources were allocated to activities which contributed to resolving the serious problems currently facing the world. As Member States placed greater reliance on the United Nations and considered larger investments in programmes such as peace-keeping and peacemaking, steps must be taken to build confidence in the Organization's operational effectiveness. The Fifth Committee's recommendations on the revised estimates must therefore include the necessary guidance on the next stages of reform.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
62nd meeting
held on
Wednesday, 31 March 1993
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 62nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. DINU (Romania)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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AGENDA ITEM 104: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (*continued*)*

Revised estimates as requested by the General Assembly in resolution 47/212

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* Items considered together.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 103: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 104: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued)

Revised estimates as requested by the General Assembly in resolution 47/212 (A/47/7/Add.15; A/C.5/47/88)

1. Mr. VARELA (Chile), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela), fully supported the comments of the Group of 77 and stressed that restructuring should be carried out in the spirit of the guidelines laid down in the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade and the relevant General Assembly resolutions (in particular, resolutions 45/264, 46/232 and 46/235). Being convinced that the maintenance of peace and security was closely linked to economic and social development, the countries of the Rio Group could only welcome the proposals aimed at revitalizing the Secretariat. However, they agreed with earlier speakers that it was regrettable that the Secretary-General's report contained neither an overall plan for restructuring nor specific information on the mechanisms which would ensure coordination between the three new departments established in the economic and social sector.

2. As the Advisory Committee had rightly indicated in paragraphs 19 to 21 of its report, more justification was needed in relation to the transfer of functions and posts. The Rio Group was gratified that the Secretary-General intended to strengthen the role of the regional commissions, but stressed that true decentralization meant decentralization to the level of individual countries. Noting that the transfer to Geneva of activities concerning transnational corporations and science and technology for development was designed to strengthen the role of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), he drew attention to the importance of UNCTAD for the well-balanced development of world trade.

3. The comments of the Advisory Committee regarding vacancy management, in particular concerning reporting to the intergovernmental bodies concerned, were most apt. With regard to the restructuring of the Department of Administration and Management, the Advisory Committee had rightly requested the Secretary-General to deal on an urgent basis with the outstanding issues regarding peace-keeping operations. Furthermore, as the Group of 77 had remarked, it was a matter of concern that the post of the Head of the International Trade Centre (ITC) had not yet been filled and that the Secretariat was considering downgrading that post to the D-2 level, since the Centre played a major role in the promotion of more equitable trade. He was also concerned that there were plans to downgrade certain management posts in the Department of Administration and Management at a time when the Department was being given expanded responsibilities. As recommended by the Advisory Committee, objective criteria should be laid down for the classification of high-level posts. With respect to the creation of D-3 posts, the Advisory Committee had rightly noted that such an

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(Mr. Varela)

approach would not necessarily improve career prospects, that it could give rise to confusion and that it should in any case first be considered by the International Civil Service Commission.

4. The countries of the Group of 77 stressed that the practical application of the Secretary-General's proposals should not impair the implementation of the programmes approved by the General Assembly. While they recognized the prerogatives of the Secretary-General with regard to organization, they pointed out that the Secretariat was at the service of the Member States. If the Member States had certain reservations and questions, it was because they had not always been sufficiently consulted. It was therefore essential that subsequent proposals should be clearly presented to them and should take their concerns into account.

5. Mr. FONTAINE-ORTIZ (Cuba) said that he fully shared the views of the Group of 77 and the Rio Group. He was gratified that, contrary to what had occurred during the first phase of restructuring, a dialogue had been initiated between the Secretariat and the Member States. The second phase was an attempt to redress the imbalance created to the detriment of the economic and social sector during the first phase, which had resulted in the strengthening of the political sector along the lines hoped for by the developed countries. He reminded those who complained that there had been no opportunity for the Secretary-General's proposals to be considered by the relevant intergovernmental bodies that that had also occurred during the first phase.

6. He regretted that the Secretariat had neither drawn up an overall plan for restructuring nor set clear time-frames. Since reform should not be an end in itself, during the third phase, the results would have to be consolidated and the structure of the Secretariat established. That should be done in such a way as to comply with General Assembly resolution 47/212 and the numerous other resolutions in which the General Assembly had reaffirmed that the Secretary-General should not prejudge decisions by Member States regarding the revitalization of the economic and social sectors.

7. Contrary to the claim of the Secretary-General in paragraph 63 of his report, there was no consensus about the need for a unified United Nations presence and approach at the country level. The Group of 77 had duly drawn attention to that fact. He hoped that the Secretariat would take into account the observations of the Advisory Committee in that respect.

8. He stressed that there were no guidelines from any deliberative body which made it possible to claim that developing countries and countries in transition had the same level of priority, or that the United Nations could deal with issues relating to the sovereignty of Member States. Any proposals along such lines should be eliminated.

9. The transfer from New York to Geneva of activities relating to transnational corporations and science and technology for development was not in itself important, if there was a well-defined structure responsible for the full implementation of programmes approved by Member States. His delegation was prepared to participate in the search for an agreement to that effect.

(Mr. Fontaine-Ortiz, Cuba)

10. He supported the comments of the Advisory Committee regarding vacancy management. Excessive use was being made of temporary transfers and it was important to return to the applicable regulations in that respect. With regard to high-level posts, his delegation endorsed the remarks of the Group of 77 and the Rio Group. It supported all the comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee and hoped that the revised estimates would be adopted, on the understanding that the Secretary-General should be given clear guidelines for the preparation of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

11. Mr. OSELLA (Argentina) said that he fully supported the statement made by the representative of Chile on behalf of the Rio Group. As the Finnish delegation had done on behalf of the Nordic countries, he wished to voice his concern regarding the financing of the activities of the very important Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on climate change. The contracts of several staff members who provided secretariat services for the Committee were due to expire on 31 March 1993 and he wondered whether they would be renewed.

12. Mr. DUVAL (Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Finance), replying to the representative of Argentina, confirmed that the resources allocated to the Intergovernmental Committee at the time of the adoption of resolution 47/195 had been maintained in the revised estimates. The Secretariat had, *inter alia*, provided for the transfer of four vacant posts to that heading. The staffing levels approved for the first quarter of 1993 would thus be maintained in full until 31 December. The one-week gap which would occur between the expiry of certain contracts and the adoption of the revised estimates would have no effect.

13. Mr. BARIMANI (Islamic Republic of Iran) supported the remarks made by the Colombian delegation on behalf of the Group of 77. He simply wished to add that the transfer of the World Food Council from Rome to New York would not of itself guarantee greater efficiency. The Secretary-General's proposal in that respect might hamper the intergovernmental consultations under way. Any modification should be completely in accordance with resolutions 45/264 and 47/150.

14. Mr. DADZIE (Special Adviser and Delegate of the Secretary-General on the Reform of the Economic and Social Sector) said that the dialogue between the Secretariat and the Member States was very encouraging. He stressed that nothing in the Secretary-General's proposals could be interpreted as an attempt to modify programmes and priorities established by Governments. The task of the Secretariat was simply to implement them.

15. With regard to the transfer of the Office for Projects Services, he said that that proposal would not be implemented before the beginning of 1994, by which time the Governing Council of UNDP would have considered its budget proposals and the General Assembly would have examined the proposed programme budget of the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION
Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
63rd meeting
held on
Monday, 5 April 1993
at 6.30 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 63rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ZAHID (Vice-Chairman) (Morocco)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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AGENDA ITEM 124: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (*continued*)

Establishment of a peace-keeping reserve fund

AGENDA ITEM 104: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (*continued*)

Revised estimates under section 31: Establishment of seven United Nations interim offices

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13 August 1993
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In the absence of Mr. Dinu (Romania), Mr. Zahid (Morocco), Vice-Chairman took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 6.50 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 145: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OPERATION IN SOMALIA (A/47/916)

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), orally presenting the Advisory Committee's report on the financing of the United Nations Operation in Somalia, briefly reviewed the resolutions by which the Security Council had decided to establish the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) and subsequently to extend and expand its mandate.

2. The Secretary-General was requesting the General Assembly to approve an additional appropriation of $327.2 million gross ($326 million net) to cover requirements for the first two months of UNOSOM II (May and June 1993). In paragraph 7 of his report, the Secretary-General indicated that, taking into consideration the existing equipment already in place for UNOSOM, the cost of UNOSOM II was estimated at $397.2 million gross ($396 million net) for the first two months. Start-up costs ($186.3 million) would be for accommodation, emplacement, transport, communication and miscellaneous equipment, while operational costs would amount to $210.9 million gross ($209.7 million net).

3. By resolution 47/41, the General Assembly had apportioned an amount of $109.7 million gross ($107.9 million net) among Member States. Of that amount, $58.9 million remained outstanding as at 28 March 1993. It was estimated that an unencumbered balance of some $70 million would be available at the end of April 1993 from the appropriation provided to UNOSOM.

4. As the Secretary-General had pointed out, more time would be needed to assess the detailed requirements of UNOSOM II. Nevertheless, the Advisory Committee believed that adjustments could be made in the amounts requested for items such as rental and maintenance of premises (including prefabricated housing), acquisition of vehicles and equipment, rental of aircraft, depreciation in value of contingent-owned vehicles and equipment, and other items such as civilian staff costs, support costs and staff assessment. The Committee expected that in the context of the detailed budget estimates to be submitted by the Secretary-General full justification would be providing for the request for prefabricated housing, taking into account existing accommodation for the Unified Task Force (UNITAF). Since the lead time for installation of prefabricated housing was approximately six months, the entire amount indicated for that item would not necessarily be required during the first two months. Similarly, the amount indicated for depreciation of contingent-owned vehicles would not necessarily be required in the initial stages and, given the current vacancy rate, staff costs as indicated in the annex appeared to be on the high side. On the other hand, since all the relevant information was still not available, it was quite possible that unforeseen expenditure would arise.

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(Mr. Mselle)

5. In the circumstances, and pending submission of a detailed budget for UNOSOM II and the performance report for UNOSOM, the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should appropriate and assess the sum of $300 million gross to cover the requirements of UNOSOM II during the initial two-month period, beginning 1 May 1993.

6. Mr. DUHALT (Mexico) said that his delegation would have liked a representative of the Secretary-General to give a brief description of the activities envisaged in the report. Since UNOSOM was one of the most important peace-keeping operations from a financial point of view, it was surprising that the Secretary-General's report was so short. That sort of approach did not facilitate the taking of a rational decision. His delegation hoped that in future, for other peace-keeping operations, sufficiently detailed budgetary documents would be made available to enable the Fifth Committee to take well-informed decisions.

7. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) said that his delegation wished to pay tribute to the countries which had contributed troops to the Unified Task Force (UNITAF), as well as to all those bodies which were providing assistance to the Somalis. The efforts of the international community had been eagerly supported by Japan, which had contributed $100 million to the Trust Fund for Somalia established by the Secretary-General and had in the current year contributed $20 million for humanitarian assistance.

8. His delegation understood that the estimates presented in the report (A/47/916) were the best that the Secretariat could produce in the present circumstances. It also understood the urgent need to appropriate the start-up costs in order to achieve a smooth transition between UNITAF and UNOSOM II. At the same time, it shared the view of the Advisory Committee regarding the possibilities of making adjustments in certain areas, and therefore supported its recommendation that the sum of $300 million gross should be appropriated for the initial two-month period.

9. His delegation expressed its appreciation to the Secretariat for having been able to produce estimates in such a short period of time, but was concerned that the General Assembly had had to appropriate sizeable amounts on the basis of sketchy estimates. He suggested that, in order to avoid a repetition of such extraordinary procedures, a solution should be sought in the context of the debate on agenda item 124 (Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peace-keeping operations). Finally, he requested that the Advisory Committee should continue to present its recommendations in writing, in accordance with the normal practice, in order to ensure transparency and facilitate consideration of the budget.

10. Mr. KLINGENBERG (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the European Community and its member States, said that the Community had on a number of previous occasions expressed its concern over the budgetary procedure currently followed by the Secretariat in connection with peace-keeping operations. As it had recently indicated with regard to the financing of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique, the Community was opposed in principle to the practice of appropriating lump sums or making advance payments for non-specifiable costs. It was of the utmost importance that the Secretary-General should ensure more

(Mr. Klingenberg, Denmark)

effective planning and budget management of peace-keeping operations and his delegation looked forward to having a response to inquiries which had been made earlier as to what measures the Secretary-General had taken or was planning to take to that end.

11. The Community was conscious of the urgent need to establish and deploy UNOSOM in order to prevent any deterioration of the situation in Somalia, as well as of the difficulties in launching an operation on such a scale. However, one of the reasons why the Secretariat was again seeking substantial appropriations in advance of the review in the General Assembly was the fact that Member States did not pay all their contributions in full and on time. Member States, and especially the larger contributors, should therefore give due consideration to that problem, even if that meant adjusting their own budgetary cycles. In that context, it was a matter of very serious concern to the Community to see that the peace-keeping reserve fund was still waiting for cash contributions. In short, Member States which did not fulfil their Charter obligations not only jeopardized peace-keeping operations at a crucial moment of their organization, but also deprived intergovernmental bodies of proper budgetary control over operations at their outset. In that connection, the Community drew attention to General Assembly resolution 47/215 on improving the financial situation of the United Nations.

12. By providing incomplete information, the Secretariat was complicating matters for both the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee. It was not in the interests of either UNOSOM or the United Nations that decisions should be taken without sufficient information. The Community would therefore reserve its position until the information which it and other Member States had requested was provided by the Secretariat. Finally, the European Community wished to stress its commitment to the peace process in Somalia.

13. Mr. SENGWE (Zimbabwe) said that now that UNITAF had fulfilled its mission, the international community should ensure the deployment of UNOSOM II in accordance with the mandate which had recently been defined by the Security Council. His delegation knew that there were problems to be solved, as other delegations had noted, and it shared the concerns which had been voiced regarding the lack of budgetary information. However, it was extremely important to ensure a rapid deployment of UNOSOM II in order to benefit from the favourable political climate currently reigning in Somalia, where the parties concerned had recently agreed to finalize a transition mechanism. His delegation therefore supported the recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an appropriation of $300 million to cover the start-up costs of the operation.

14. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) expressed the hope that UNOSOM II would follow up on the efforts already undertaken by a substantial number of countries, including the United States, whose contribution to the United Nations intervention force amounted to approximately $1 billion. His delegation shared some of the concerns expressed by others regarding the overall amount requested by the Secretary-General, and believed, as did Japan, that current budgeting practices and certain rules of financial management must be re-examined in order to meet two requirements: first, Member States should allow the Secretary-General and the Organization to take quick action when the situation so required; and second, the Secretariat should provide Member States with

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(Mr. Michalski, United States)

sufficient information to reassure them that the funds would be put to the best use. His delegation hoped that new thinking on those questions would soon produce concrete results. Lastly, with respect to the payment of assessments, he recalled that the Clinton Administration intended to comply fully with the obligations of the United States to the United Nations. During the calendar year 1992, payments by the United States had accounted for more than 40 per cent of the Organization's total collections for all peace-keeping operations.

15. Mr. GATHUNGU (Kenya) said that, taking into account the complexity of the projected operation and the very tight schedule it had been given, the Secretariat had done remarkable work. The problems associated with the presentation of that kind of budget which had been mentioned by several delegations were not new and should be examined separately. His delegation did not underestimate the importance of those problems, but believed that urgent action was needed. It was well aware of the heavy financial burden which the UNOSOM II operation represented for Member States, including Kenya, but that burden was the consequence of a decision taken by the Security Council following a detailed examination of the question. While the requests made by the Secretary-General appeared reasonable, his delegation could accept the recommendations of the Advisory Committee to the extent that the recommended reduction would not undermine the implementation of Security Council resolution 814 B.

16. Mr. FRANCIS (Australia) said he had no objection in principle to the Secretary-General's proposal. His delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation with respect to the amount of financing proposed for the two-month period and hoped to see a complete and detailed budget well before the end of June. Naturally, his delegation was still concerned about the general problem of financing peace-keeping operations.

17. Mr. BAUDOT (Controller) said that, while the budget before the Committee lacked detail, it should not be considered as a simple lump-sum package; a detailed budget would be presented as soon as possible. Moreover, given the expanding scope of UNOSOM, the Secretary-General would have been obliged to request an appropriation even if the financial situation had been normal.

18. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should resume its consideration of the item in informal consultations.

19. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 124: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (A/47/898) (continued)

Establishment of a Peace-keeping Reserve Fund (A/47/898)

20. Mr. BAUDOT (Controller) drew attention to paragraph 5 of the Secretary-General's note (A/47/898), which indicated that $9.5 million from the Peace-keeping Reserve Fund had been earmarked to meet initial costs associated with the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ). The allocation to ONUMOZ was perfectly consistent with the overall purpose of the Fund, and brought to $32.9 million the Fund's total outstanding loans to the United

(Mr. Baudot)

Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM), the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM), and the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL). None of those operations was in a position to repay the loans.

21. The Reserve Fund was the only remaining recourse for coping with the problem of financing peace-keeping operations, since the sums left over from the accounts of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) and the United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG) had already been transferred to it. When the lack of liquidity of several operations (one of which, UNAVEM, owed $11.9 million to the General Fund and was not in a position to repay) was taken into account, it became clear that the Fund could not fulfil its mandate with the resources currently available. The very establishment of the Fund represented a step forward, but there was no hiding the fact that if Member States were not more punctual in making their payments, the development of peace-keeping operations would pose increasingly intractable financial problems.

22. Mr. FRANCIS (Australia) said he was surprised to learn that, of the $59 million paid into the Reserve Fund, $32.9 million had been lent to three ongoing operations that were not in a position to repay the funds already advanced. The Fund had thus been deprived for resources expressly earmarked to pay for the start-up of new peace-keeping operations. However, his delegation had always been convinced that the Fund had been undercapitalized from the beginning and that the Secretariat should not have any internal borrowing powers.

23. In paragraph 4 of his report, the Secretary-General stated that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 42/216 A, the unencumbered balances of Member States contributions in the General Account would be used first to reimburse the Special Account and the Working Capital Fund before payment could be made to the Reserve Fund for Peace-keeping Operations. His delegation believed that the decision on that issue should be taken by Member States, which might prefer to give higher priority to reconstituting the Reserve Fund. In order to help Member States take an informed decision in that regard, the Secretariat should provide information regarding the amounts owed to the Working Capital Fund and the Special Account from the General Fund, the unencumbered balances of the contributions of Member States in each peace-keeping account, and the unliquidated obligations against each peace-keeping account.

24. More generally, the fact that three quarters of the contributions payable for peace-keeping operations had remained unpaid at the end of February showed that the problem went well beyond the Reserve Fund and required a more energetic response than continuous exhortations to Member States. The idea of an annual budget for peace-keeping operations deserved further study, but other measures could be imagined as well, including the imposition of sanctions on Member States accumulating large arrears; such sanctions might be more severe than those provided for under Article 19 of the Charter but could operate in a similar manner.

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25. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) said that General Assembly resolution 47/217 had set out clearly the method for determining the amount to be transferred from UNTAG and UNIIMOG to the Reserve Fund for Peace-keeping Operations. The General Assembly had already established the residual amounts in those accounts that were to be credited to Member States, and he would like to know when that decision would be implemented.

26. With respect to the amount retained in the General Fund pursuant to resolution 42/216 A, his delegation regretted that the transfer to the Peace-keeping Reserve Fund called for under resolution 47/217 (1992) had not been made. Member States had intended the transfer to provide financing for the start-up of peace-keeping operations. Moreover, his delegation believed that the Secretary-General's policy of according priority to the repayment of amounts owed to the Special Account and the Working Capital Fund had the effect of penalizing States that had paid their contributions as against those that had not and was in conflict with article 5.2 (d) of the Financial Regulations. Lastly, his delegation hoped that the Secretariat would provide the Committee with a statement of the cash position and a cash-flow projection for the regular budget and the peace-keeping operations accounts, as well a report on how the Working Capital Fund and the Special Account had been used during the current year.

27. His delegation believed that the amount of the Peace-keeping Reserve Fund should be determined on the basis of objective data. He did not know how the Independent Advisory Group sponsored by the Ford Foundation had arrived at the figure of $400 million. The current amount of $150 million was no doubt sufficient. In order to judge whether it was or not, however, the Secretariat must specify the level of reserves that it believed was required, taking into account the unencumbered balances of all peace-keeping accounts that could be used to finance the start-up of operations in the future.

28. Interest income earned in the Reserve Fund could either be set off against future assessed contributions or credited as income in the annual budget which the Advisory Committee had recommended should be established for the support account for peace-keeping operations (A/47/757).

29. Lastly, no working capital fund or revolving fund could continue to operate unless early and full reimbursement of amounts advanced was ensured. Member States should pay their assessed contributions in a manner consistent with the Charter but in addition the procedures for establishing peace-keeping budgets and the process of issuing assessment letters should be improved and accelerated.

30. Ms. ERIKSSON FOGH (Sweden) welcomed the fact that the Reserve Fund had finally been established, but stressed that its purpose should not be to make up for the shortcomings of Member States. The loans which had already been granted should be considered exceptional, since the Fund was not a mere cash reserve but a tool quite specifically designed to facilitate the launching of new peace-keeping operations. The General Assembly should therefore specify how the resources of the Fund should be allocated, for example by authorizing the Secretary-General, when starting a new operation, to borrow a certain percentage of the budget approved by the Security Council for that operation. Furthermore,

(Ms. Eriksson Fogh, Sweden)

his delegation was of the opinion that interest in credit should remain at the disposal of the Fund.

31. Ms. ROEDSMOEN (Norway) asked what percentage of the contributions was currently paid within three months of their assessment.

32. Mr. MERIFIELD (Canada) wished to have more information on how the Reserve Fund was managed. In particular, he wished to know whether the Secretariat had a realistic assessment of the chances of recovering the amounts loaned and how long repayment would take.

33. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands) wondered whether the short note of the Secretary-General constituted his reply to paragraph (l) of resolution 47/217. His delegation was making a formal request that the report requested by the General Assembly should be submitted to the Fifth Committee through the Advisory Committee so that the Advisory Committee could give its opinion to the Fifth Committee, in particular with regard to applying paragraph (k) of resolution 47/217.

34. Mr. FONTAINE (Cuba) asked about the procedure adopted with respect to the report of the Group of Independent Experts, which had not been officially submitted to the General Assembly but certain recommendations of which the Secretary-General apparently wished to take up and have approved by the Member States, without consulting the Advisory Committee.

35. Mr. BAUDOT (Controller) said that the Secretariat intended, if possible before the end of April, to draw up an addendum to the latest report of the Secretary-General on the financial situation of the Organization. It would show most, if not all, of the information requested on the liquidity situation (regular budget and peace-keeping operations). There would also be a response to the request of the Netherlands regarding the report on implementing resolution 47/217. With respect to the question asked by Norway, there was a certain improvement, since the percentage of contributions paid within three months of their assessment had, for certain operations, risen from 36 to nearly 60 per cent.

36. The report of the Group of Independent Experts was not a United Nations document but it had been sent to the capitals of the Member States, and the Secretariat was considering how it might be submitted to the Fifth Committee. Before the end of the year, the Secretary-General would express his view on various recommendations on improving the working of the Organization, including those of the Group. The General Assembly would then be able to examine those recommendations with the help of the Advisory Committee before giving its opinion. Regarding the size of the self-refilling fund for peace-keeping operations, he stated that the figure of $400 million put forward by the experts had been arrived at by essentially empirical procedures.

37. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there were no objections, he would take it that the Fifth Committee wished to recommend that the General Assembly should take note of the note by the Secretary-General entitled "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peace-keeping operations:

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(The Chairman)

establishment of a Peace-Keeping Reserve Fund" and to invite him to submit to it, through the Advisory Committee, a report on implementing resolution 47/217, in view of the opinions expressed by the delegations.

38. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 104: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued)

Revised estimates under section 31: Establishment of seven United Nations interim offices (A/47/7/Add.16, A/C.5/47/89)

39. Mr. CLAVIJO (Colombia) felt that, in its report (A/47/7/Add.16), the Advisory Committee had given a very good summary of the situation regarding the question of United Nations interim offices. It had indicated in paragraph 11 that the policy decision with regard to the financing of those offices had yet to be decided upon, and recommended in paragraph 12 that the Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session should be considered by the Committee on Information and the Special Political Committee before the General Assembly took action. However, his delegation found the last sentence of paragraph 12 more difficult to understand. In it the Advisory Committee recommended that arrangements which had not yet been the subject of any decision by the Fifth Committee should be considered provisional and exceptional.

40. It was first of all necessary to question the need to support certain proposed activities, in particular those to be financed by UNDP. It was proposed to list the United Nations share of the costs of the offices under the budget programme section on information activities, even though neither the Committee on Information nor the Special Political Committee had yet considered that question in substance. Given the concerns expressed by certain delegations, he therefore wondered whether it would not be possible to list those expenses under the sections on humanitarian assistance and technical cooperation, taking due account of the mandates in force. Given the urgency of the situation, his delegation could accept such a solution, with the proviso that it should not constitute a precedent.

41. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands) said that document A/C.5/47/89 did not make clear whether the various agencies had had a substantive exchange of views regarding the unified presence of the United Nations in the field, in particular in the countries concerned by that proposal. It was imperative that that substantive debate should take place before decisions were taken concerning the establishment and siting of United Nations offices. Adequate procedures and budgetary arrangements should be established for the whole system in order to prevent agencies from "going it alone" or engaging in detrimental competition in the field. The extraordinary session of the Governing Council of UNDP held in February 1993 had been somewhat disappointing in that respect. His delegation therefore wished to know whether the Secretariat had taken steps to organize an in-depth exchange of views between United Nations agencies and, if so, how soon and between which agencies.

(Mr. Spaans, Netherlands)

42. His delegation noted that, in the view of the Advisory Committee, the proposal under consideration was not based on any decision by a legislative body. Furthermore, his delegation asked the Secretariat to explain why the sum requested was approximately 30 per cent more than that contained in document A/C.5/47/58.

43. Mr. FONTAINE (Cuba) said that a stop should be put to the trend towards having the Fifth Committee consider documents which had not been submitted by the Controller or the Chairman of the Advisory Committee.

44. His delegation recalled that, in resolution 47/219, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to re-submit a complete report on the establishment and operation of the seven United Nations interim offices, including staffing, project implementation and an integrated budget with full sources of financing, at its resumed forty-seventh session, in accordance, as he emphasized, with the relevant resolutions and decisions of the competent United Nations bodies regarding operational activities and public information activities.

45. He concluded, as had the Advisory Committee, that there was no instruction which authorized submission of the report of the Secretary-General for consideration (A/C.5/47/89). Furthermore, that report contained nothing new in comparison with the preceding report, whose defects it retained. Thus, in paragraph 17, the information collection function assigned to the interim offices regarding official comments on issues of concern to the Secretary-General and the United Nations did not involve the Department of Public Information. The Secretariat should indicate clearly whether or not the project was political, as suggested by the fact that the person chosen to be the leader of the working group entrusted with that question was the Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs. A question of which several aspects involved peace and security, or democracy and human rights (para. 9 of the report) was a matter not so much for the Fifth Committee as for the Security Council.

46. In paragraph 20, it was stipulated that each interim office would have one United Nations representative and one United Nations deputy representative. The Member States had considered that question at great length, but had not yet reached a consensus.

47. His delegation accepted the recommendation of the Advisory Committee (para. 12 of document A/47/7/Add.16), except for the last sentence, in which the Committee recommended that the arrangements currently in place should be considered provisional and exceptional. That would be tantamount to approving a measure contrary to the decisions of the General Assembly with respect to the unified presence of the United Nations. That question should be referred to the Committee on Information and the Special Political Committee, as well as the Second Committee, which dealt with operational development activities.

48. There had apparently been an attempt to use an emergency situation to launch a trial balloon which might make it possible subsequently to extend the experiment to developing countries. His delegation wished to stress that it

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(Mr. Fontaine, Cuba)

would resist any attempt of that sort and that it could not accept the Secretary-General's proposal so long as the competent political bodies had not yet voiced their opinion.

49. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that he well understood the objections prompted by the lack of instructions from a legislative authority, but doubted whether the information activities referred to in paragraph 17 of the Secretary-General's report were different from those of other United Nations information centres. With respect to the expected cost for the seven local-level field posts (para. 30), he wondered whether the amount shown included other items apart from staff salaries and expenses. If not, the amount seemed high with respect to salary levels in the countries in question.

50. Ms. ERIKSSON FOGH (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, noted with satisfaction that, in accordance with resolutions of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, there was an integrated approach to the support given by United Nations agencies to the newly independent States. Since resources were limited, it was important for those agencies to act jointly, given their comparative advantages and in collaboration with Governments, donors, financial institutions, regional institutions, NGOs, etc.

51. The Nordic countries supported the recommendations put forward by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 11 and 12 of its report. A more detailed report would be needed in order to apportion the administrative expenses of the interim offices among the agencies in question. In that connection, the Nordic countries stressed that indicative planning figures (IPFs) should not be used to finance such expenses.

52. Mr. RAE (India) agreed with the Advisory Committee that the proposals put forward by the Secretary-General to secure partial financing of the interim offices raised a fundamental question, that of deployment of United Nations agencies in the field, on which there was no consensus yet. There were thus no instructions thereon. He agreed with the representative of Cuba that the Second Committee should also consider the question, taking into account General Assembly resolution 47/199. Finally, he was concerned that IPFs were to be used.

53. Mr. GOUMENNY (Ukraine) said that the establishment of interim offices demonstrated the Secretary-General's concern to make rational use of the limited resources in providing the newly independent States with the assistance they so badly needed. He stressed that information activities promoted the implementation of technical assistance programmes. The functions of the interim offices were clearly defined by the agreements concluded by the United Nations agencies and the Governments of the countries in question, as was shown by an extract of the agreement concerning Kiev, which he proceeded to read out. His delegation thus wanted the Committee to approve the Secretary-General's proposals but, bearing in mind the concerns expressed by certain delegations, was prepared, in a spirit of compromise, to accept the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. His delegation was also in favour of having the

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(Mr. Goumenny, Ukraine)

Secretary-General's report to the forty-eighth session submitted not only to the Committee on Information and the Special Political Committee, but also to the Second Committee.

54. Mr. ABELIAN (Armenia) recalled that the Governments of the newly independent States had approved the opening of the interim offices. Given the exceptional character of the process on which those countries were embarked, the United Nations agencies had opted for an integrated approach, which was set out in report DP/1993/5.

55. In paragraph 27 of his report, the Secretary-General had mentioned the extremely difficult situation in Armenia, which was under a veritable blockade. The Secretariat estimated the non-renewable expenses that would be incurred by the establishment of an interim office in Armenia in 1993 at $274,200. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's proposal and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. He concurred with the Advisory Committee that the question should be referred to the Committee on Information and the Special Political Committee at the forty-eighth session, and gave his full support to the remarks of the representative of Ukraine.

56. Mr. STITT (United Kingdom) recalled that it was in order to respond to urgent needs that the United Nations agencies had, in mid-1992, acting through the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), decided to establish in the newly independent States units capable of supporting the technical cooperation activities of the system. He regretted that the General Assembly had not given clear authorization for those initiatives at its forty-seventh session. The Fifth Committee should none the less adopt the revised estimates that had been referred to it, since the General Assembly would very likely wish to ensure a permanent presence of the United Nations agencies by making available the necessary funds to the regular budget, if the Secretary-General deemed that indispensable. As for the question of a unified presence of the United Nations, such a decision could not be detrimental to the interests of any delegation.

57. Mr. YEGOROV (Belarus) said that the agreements concluded between the United Nations agencies and the Governments in question were identical to those which had previously been concluded with other countries. As a number of delegations had already remarked, he recognized that the question was complex and a matter for the Second Committee, among other bodies. Given the exceptional circumstances, it would be necessary to accept the compromise proposed by the Advisory Committee until such time as the General Assembly was able to give its opinion.

58. Mr. NDOBOLI (Uganda) said that his delegation supported in principle all the efforts exerted to assist the countries in transition, but regretted that the Committee on Information and the Special Political Committee had not been consulted. The decision proposed was tantamount to trying to anticipate the position that would be finally adopted on the pattern of United Nations presence at the national level. His delegation supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, but reserved its position on the last two sentences of paragraph 12 of the Committee's report.

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59. Mr. BAUDOT (Controller) was pleased that none of the delegations was questioning the usefulness of the interim offices, which had been explicitly recognized by the Governments of the countries in question. Their description as "interim" offices well reflected the particular circumstances under which those offices had been established; they had never been thought of as information centres. A full report would be submitted by the Secretary-General at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly and nothing would be decided without the agreement of the General Assembly.

60. At the current stage it was necessary to decide on the details of financing for 1993. The agreement concluded with UNDP for the apportionment of expenses would probably not be amended. The Secretary-General was proposing to use the Reserve Fund for the biennium 1992-1993, which would save having to charge the amount in question to chapter 31. Colombia had rightly raised the question of which sections of the budget the resources required should come under. The Secretariat would consider the various options when working out the draft programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995. If the Fifth Committee was opposed to using the Reserve Fund, deployments of resources would be necessary.

61. Mr. FONTAINE (Cuba) said that from a purely technical point of view it would be wrong to use the Reserve Fund since the Fund could be used only to finance new activities deriving from the decisions of legislative authorities, which was not the case. The argument that the initiatives taken were the result of a decision of ACC was not valid either inasmuch as ACC was not a legislative authority. He stressed that his position implied no reservation with respect to the countries in question. He merely felt that the Secretary-General's proposal was not in their interest.

62. If the activities of the interim offices remained within the framework of technical and development assistance, it might be possible to find a solution. He nevertheless wondered why the question had been referred to the Fifth Committee if the financing could be found by transferring resources or through arrangements of which the Secretary-General had availed himself thus far in order to secure the necessary resources. In any case, his delegation was ready to take part in the search for a solution.

The meeting rose at 9.50 p.m.